Socio-economic and cultural context of Bangladeshi women in North-East England

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Socio-economic and Cultural Context of Bangladeshi Women in North-East England

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DECLARATION

The work contained in this thesis is entirely that of author. Material from the published work of others, which is referred to in this thesis, is credited to the author(s) in the text. No part of this work has been submitted for any other degree in this or any other university.

The length of the thesis conforms with the word limit set out in the Degree Regulations.

(Fathema Zhura Khatoon)

ABSTRACT

My research looks at the different socio-economic and cultural aspects of Bangladeshi ethnic minority women living in North-East England. Given the nature of the topic and constraints due to my personal circumstances, I conducted an efficient social survey which achieved a high response rate without compromising good standards of research. Ethical considerations also influenced the detail of how the research methods were chosen, implemented and interpreted.

Participatory observation and an in-depth questionnaire associated with semi-structured interview data were used to produce basic information on the extent and effects of the variables in my research. Focus group meetings were also valuable in revealing the multiple understandings of participants regarding different issues in my research. I also engaged with Visual Ethnography in order to accumulate further, complementary information.

The thesis shows the different socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the daily living experience of immigrant Bangladeshi women living in different parts of Northeast England. Different issues like demographic characteristics, including migration status, economic activities, movements, different fears, anxieties, wariness, housing and health conditions, were surveyed. The research shows that Bangladeshi women are constrained by many social, cultural and practical difficulties, including conservative attitudes to the role of women in their own community. The language barrier is also problematic for many women, along with a lack of educational qualifications. Further research is now required on the lifeworlds of Bangladeshi women in Britain and the various factors in their lack of empowerment.

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Fathema Zhura Khatoon

DEDICATION

To my husband, twin sons and parents

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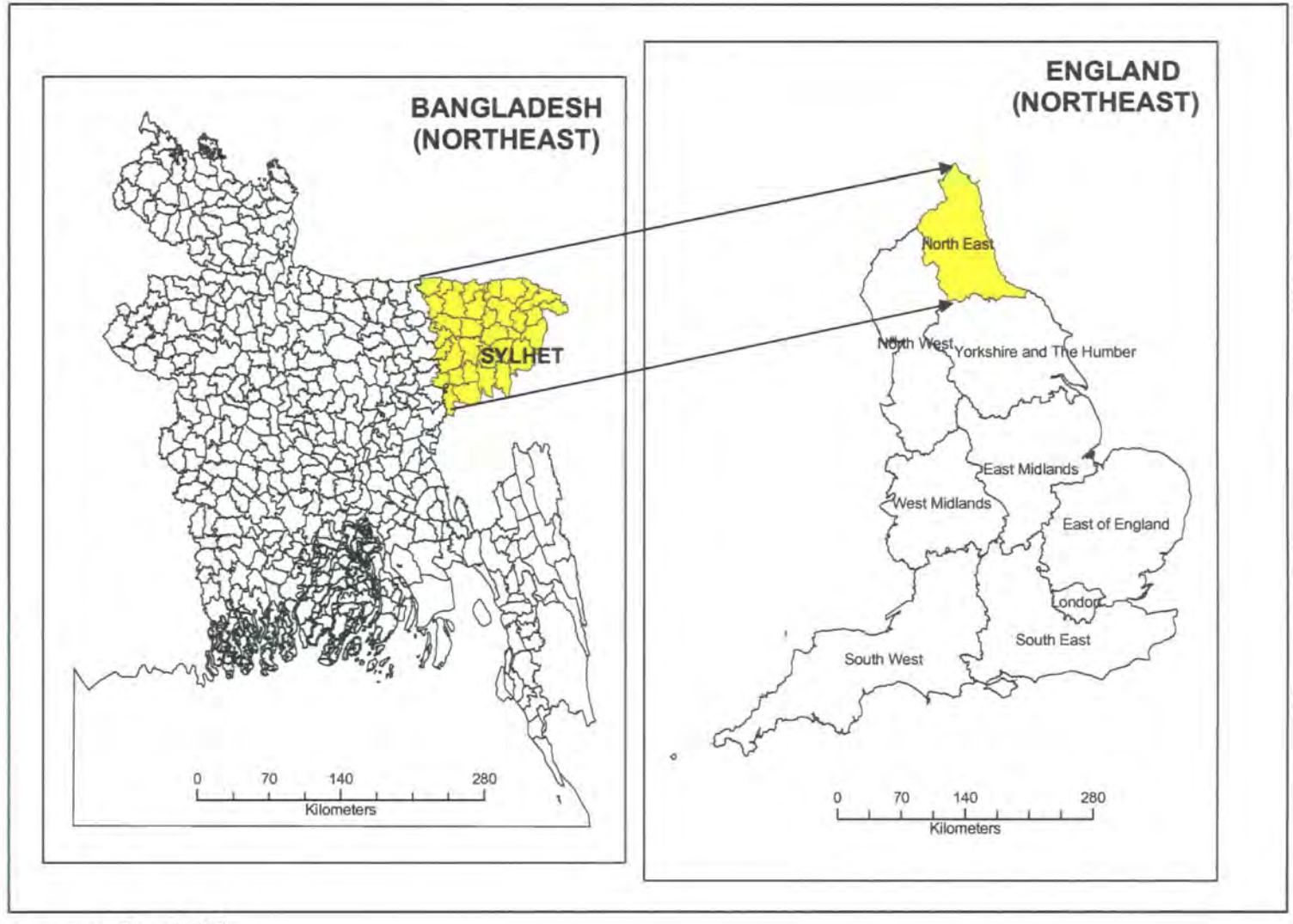
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of Research

The inter-relationships of race, gender, class, culture, sexuality and identity of ethnic minorities are highly contested in contemporary debates (Brah 1996). Ethnic minorities are a significant part of the population of most urban areas in England. Studies of these people have greatly expanded over the past 10 years. Knowledge about particular sub-groups is still limited, especially in respect of the Bangladeshi population in Britain. The migration history of Bangladeshis is relatively recent compared with other minorities - particularly in relation to completed families. The vast majority have come from one district, Sylhet, and, through a process of chain migration, a substantial number come from rural locations within this district. They speak the Sylheti dialect and the first generation at least had a low of level of literacy in standard Bengali.

Feminist geography became established in the early 1980s and can be defined as follows. It is the examination of the ways in which socio-economic, political and environmental processes create, reproduce and transform not only the places we live in, but also the social relations between men and women in these places and how, in turn, gender relations also have an impact on these processes and their manifestations. That is, feminist geography is concerned with understanding the interrelations between socially constructed gender relations and socially constructed environments (Little, et al. 1988).

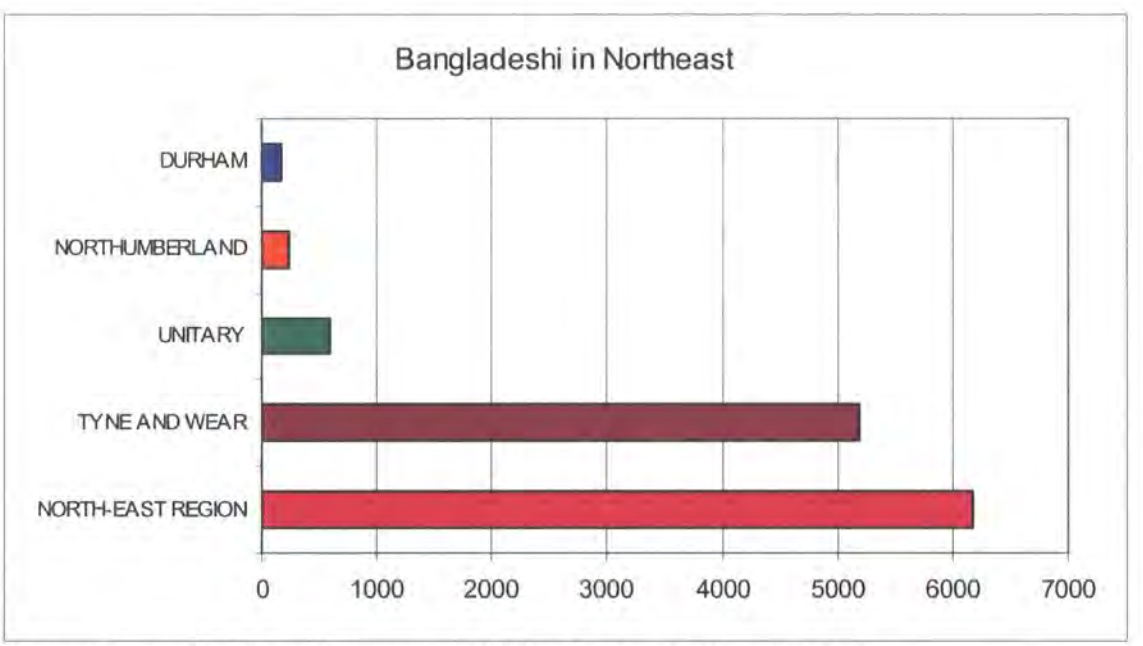
This research looks at the different socio-economic and cultural aspects of Bangladeshi ethnic minority women living in North-East England. In the name of multiculturalism and racial harmony, it is essential to give attention to their activities in order to understand their real situation, fears and anxieties, contribution to development and their incorporation in the development planning process.



Source: Author 2005.

Figure 1.1. Migration region (Migrated from Sylhet Northeast of Bangladesh to Northeast of England).

The 1991 census recorded 163,000 people who declared themselves to be Bangladeshis in England just under half of whom were women (77,999). This is 5 per cent of the female population of all the different ethnic groups combined. According to the Office for National Statistics, the Census total of Bangladeshis in England had increased to 283,000 by April 2001. Among them, 6,169 live in the North-east of England (Figures 1.1). For example, there are 110 people living in Durham, mainly in Sacriston, Framwellgate, Newton Hall and Consett (DCCRES 2004).



Source: Compiled from Government Office for the North-east (2003).

Figure 1.2 County-wise Bangladeshi Ethnic Minority Population in North East England.

1.2 Aim of the Research

This research reveals the interaction and interconnection of space and society among ethnic minority Sylheti women living in North-East. The specific aim of the research is to understand and explore different socio-economic and cultural characteristics displayed in their daily living experience by immigrant Bangladeshi women living in different parts of Northeast England. Different aspects such as various demographic characteristics, including family size, age structure, educational qualifications, marital status, identity and language and migration process and status, will give a clear understanding of these women. In addition, their economic activities, mobility, their fears and anxieties, and their housing and health conditions, will give an idea of their overall situation

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The eight-fold objectives for the research are to:

1) Present and analyse their general personal information.
2) Understand their language, religion and identity.
3) Investigate their migration history.
4) Analyses their movements.
5) Present their involvement in different economic activities.
6) Explore and understand the fears and anxieties of Bangladeshi women in private and public places.
7) Survey household and neighbourhood patterns.
8) Investigate their general health situation.

1.4 Research Questions

This research has posed several research questions which are set according to the literature reviewed and research gaps identified.

1) What are the present demographic and family characteristics of Bangladeshi women living in northeast England?
2) What is their language, religion and identity?
3) How have they migrated and is there any scope to understand their migration process and history?
4) What are their movement patterns and related issues?
5) What are the different economic activities they are engaged in and why have they chosen them?
6) What are the fears, anxieties and worries (FA&W) of Bangladeshi women in private and public places? What causes those FA&W and what are the effects of FA&W on the women?
7) What are their household and neighbourhood patterns?
8) What is their general health situation?

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

Chapter 1 focuses on the background and statement of this research including the aim and objectives. I have highlighted the brief idea of Bangladeshi population distribution in Northeast England and different research questions are briefly outlined. Chapter 2 contains the literature review and there is a discussion of the research gaps.

The foundation of the thesis is Chapter 3. Ethnic minority statistical data collected from the Government Office of the North East is used here and their pre-processing and processing is an important basis for the selection of the fieldwork locations. The chapter starts with a brief description of the study area and ends with a history of Sylheti migration.

All of the data derived from different participatory methods used in the fieldwork are discussed in Chapter 4. This gives the opportunity to test the applicability of different methods and their advantages and disadvantages.

The main deliberation of Chapter 5 is to present the data analysis, the results, interpretation and discussion. All the visual representations and interpretive descriptions have been followed by different results and findings of the research.

Chapter 6 is the final concluding section of the research. Different limitations are reviewed in this section. The overall scenarios of the thesis are discussed briefly, with some recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Feminist geographers have covered various approaches in conducting research with excluded members of society, by using spontaneous and empowering research methods (Barbour and Kitzinger 1999; Burgess, et al. 1988; Dwyer 1993; England 1994; Patai 1991; Rose 1997; Valentine 1997; Wilkinson 1999). Mohammad (2001) extends the debate further by considering the role of the Asian researcher working with Asian women (Mohammad 2001). As a Bangladeshi woman working with other Bangladeshi women, I do not claim any primary authority in the research process, but acknowledge that this positioning has allowed me comparatively easy access to the community and helped me to find research gaps and questions which were drawn from my own experiences of Bangladeshi identification living in Britain for several years.

2.2 Education, Literacy and Employment

Interesting evidence of Bangladeshi marginalization is contained in Blackledge's (1999) research on the literacy practices and attitudes of families living in Birmingham. The study focuses on the extent to which the mothers of eighteen six-year-old Bangladeshi children were able to support their children's school-related literacy learning. He locates literacy in the context of social justice, and relations of power between majority and minority groups in society. Despite the school's attempts to involve them, the Bangladeshi women felt largely excluded from their children's schooling. They did not share the literacy of the school, so they were considered to be 'illiterate'. As they did not possess the linguistic or cultural capital demanded by the school, they were unable to contribute to their children's English literacy learning (Blackledge 1999). They reported that they had a clear understanding of how to support their children's Bengali literacy learning. However, the

school did not seem to value the mothers' Bengali literacy as a resource. Instead, the women were disempowered by school structures which demanded that they play by the linguistic rules of the dominant-culture school, or put at risk their children's academic progress (Blackledge 1999). In my research I have tried to explore how the Sylheti female family members can help in children's schooling and education for their future development.

Also on the theme of education and access to society, Dale (2002) explores some of the processes that influence access to higher education and employment for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Britain. She investigated what changes can be expected amongst younger Pakistani and Bangladeshi women who have grown up in the U.K., and how educational qualifications and family formation influence the labour market participation of these women (Dale 2002). She focused on the barriers that these women face in obtaining qualifications and employment and the extent to which they are imposed by the local labour market. By contrast with their mothers' generation, younger women who had been educated in the U.K. saw paid work as a means to independence and self-esteem. This research found that women with higher level qualifications often showed considerable determination in managing to combine paid work and child-care. Whilst most women subscribed strongly to the centrality of the family, it is clear that the majority will follow very different routes through the life-course from their mothers. The research also found that women are facing considerable barriers to employment even with higher level qualification. Dale (2002) found that if the expected increase in economic activity amongst Bangladeshi women is not to lead to even higher unemployment, there is a pressing need to ensure that potential employers do not hold negative and out-dated stereotypes of traditional Muslim women.

These barriers are also the causes of different FA&W among them and in my work I have tried to identify the mechanism behind this.

Dale et al. (2002a) examine change and diversity in the lives of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women using qualitative interviews based in Oldham and secondary analysis of the Fourth National Ethnic Minority Survey. The research found clear evidence of change across generations. Most of the older women had not been born in the U.K. and many were limited in their ability to speak English. This, together with a lack of formal qualifications, posed a considerable barrier to seeking paid work outside the home (Dale, et al. 2002a). In addition, many women had heavy family responsibilities that were compounded by material hardship. Dale et al. (2002a) also found that the younger women who had been educated in the U.K. and had no language barrier saw paid work differently. Multivariate models in their research showed that women with higher qualifications were much more likely to be economically active than women without qualifications or with overseas qualifications. They also established that the presence of dependent children had a strong negative effect. These factors also influenced the economic activity of white women but with much smaller differentials. Even with higher-level qualifications, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women experience considerable barriers to employment and have high levels of unemployment. Adherence to the Islamic faith was not, of itself, seen as a deterrent to women's participation in the labour market (Dale, et al. 2002a).

Dale et al. (2002b) examined the educational and employment experiences and aspirations of young Pakistani and Bangladeshi people living in Oldham, in Greater Manchester. Many young people demonstrated high aspirations and high levels of participation, particularly by comparison with the educational and occupational level of their parents. According to them

explanatory factors include the cultural value of education among Asian groups, the desire by parents to ensure success for their children, and the ethnic penalty which these young people incur in the labour market (Dale, et al. 2002b). The research found that not all Pakistani and Bangladeshi young people have these aspirations. Girls who wished to continue their education faced a more complex situation than boys; for girls it was important to avoid jeopardizing the family honour or reputation. Women with degree-level qualifications showed considerable determination to combine paid employment with family life (Dale, et al. 2002b). The language barrier is one of the vital issues and was identified as an important cause for different FA&W.

2.3 Social and Cultural

Phillipson et al. (2003) discussed Bangladeshi women, with a particular focus on those with responsibilities for caring for younger as well as older people. They found that there are still significant gaps in our knowledge about ethnic minority groups, especially the 35-55 year age group, who occupy a key role within multi-generational households. They also suggested that we need to know more about the rules and responsibilities of this group of women, especially within the extended family. Their research also gave an indication that it is important to investigate changes in social expectations amongst different generations of Bangladeshi women, particularly in relation to middle-aged and younger women. In my research I have also tried understand different issues related to their day to day life.

According to Nast (1994), feminist scholars have traditionally emphasized the importance of incorporating the everyday worlds of women into the historically masculinist theoretical and empirical foundations of the social sciences. Feminist geographers have uniquely contributed to the body of feminist scholarship through drawing out the importance of place

in everyday constructions of gender and more recently, sexuality (Nast 1994). From the beginning critical field-based research has been the mainstay of this sub-disciplinary research.

Hennink et al. (1999) investigated social and cultural aspects of "teenage life" among south Asian girls in Britain, particularly their experiences of relationships with boys and the extent to which they become involved in sexual activities. In-depth interviews were carried out with teenage girls and young women from Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds and a comparative group of white British girls, in four schools and one college in the South and West Health Authority Region (Hennink, et al. 1999). Asian teenage girls conformed to different behavioural norms than their white peers. They were influenced by cultural traditions, religious obligations, family loyalties and community expectations. The research found that few Asian girls became involved in relationships or sexual activities. Hennink, et al. (1999) also found that once removed from the parental home, the influence of parents and their Asian community, their social and sexual behaviour changes; they experience an independence which often involves relationships and sexuality. In contrast, white teenage girls experienced a different set of pressures which came from peers and boyfriends and accepted involvement with boys and sexual activity.

Kabeer and Mahmud (2004) illustrated that economic liberalization in Bangladesh that has led to the emergence of a number of export-oriented industries, of which the manufacture of ready-made garments is the most prominent. The industry currently employs around 1.5 million workers, the overwhelming majority of whom are women. This research explores the poverty implications of this new form of employment through a comparison of the socio-economic backgrounds, wages and working conditions and contributions to

household needs of women working for global markets with those working for domestic markets (Kabeer and Mahmud 2004).

Khanum (2001) tried to demonstrate the existence of racism as well of the apparent inability to achieve parity within British society, which forces the majority of Bangladeshi immigrants to think about their future in the homeland. This encourages them to maintain links with the sending society. One way to maintain such links is for men to have two wives. One resides in England while the other remains in the homeland to look after property, particularly arable land. In the course of time, the latter may join her husband and the co-wife in England (Khanum 2001). Due to strict immigration regulations some migrants fail to bring their spouses and children to the U.K. Such complexities have given rise to the evolution of differential household patterns amongst this community, quite distinct from existing British or other Asian household patterns. The study explored the changing pattern of household composition among Bangladeshis in England. It is clear that traditional family patterns have been affected by the migration process and by the strict immigration regulations about family reunion which have led to some Bangladeshi women finding themselves in extremely impoverished and insecure situations.

Rashid and Michaud (2000) explored the experiences of female adolescents during the 1998 floods in Bangladesh, focusing on the implications of socio-cultural norms related to notions of honour, shame, purity and pollution. These cultural notions are reinforced with greater emphasis as girls enter their adolescence, regulating their sexuality and gender relationships. In Bangladeshi society, adolescent girls are expected to maintain their virginity until marriage (Rashid and Michaud 2000). Contact is limited to one's family and extended relations. Adolescent girls tend to have limited mobility to safeguard their

'purity'. This is to ensure that the girl's reputation does not suffer, thus making it difficult for the girl to get married. Inability to maintain their 'space' and privacy from male strangers, a number of the girls were vulnerable to sexual and mental harassment. Many of them became separated from their social network of relations, which caused them a great deal of anxiety and stress. Their difficulty in trying to follow social norms has had far-reaching implications on their health, identity, family and community relations. A similar culture has been imported and is prevailing among the Bangladeshi communities in Northeast England.

Robinson, et al (1988) assessed anxiety levels in women undergoing early versus mid-trimester amniocentesis for prenatal diagnostic testing. Women randomized to EA or MA at 9-11 weeks gestation completed an initial questionnaire. (Robinson, et al. 1988). Ross, et al. (1996) investigated the contribution of anxiety symptoms to scores on the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) between 36 weeks gestation and 16 weeks postpartum in 150 women (Ross, et al. 1996).

2.4 Health

Karlsen et al. (2002) explored the influence of the environment on ethnic inequalities in health. Studies exploring the relationship between environment and health have tended to ignore the role of ethnicity, and the health impact of the residential concentration of ethnic minority groups in disadvantaged areas. Those that have explored the role of ethnicity tend to focus on the way in which residential concentration may promote a sense of community among ethnic minority groups, and, consequently, may be protective of health (the 'ethnic density effect'). They have also tended to ignore the health impact of the concentration of ethnic minority groups in areas of social and economic disadvantage. The authors

undertook a factor analysis to determine aspects of perception of 'quality' of the local environment, followed by multi-level analyses to explore the relationship between self-reported fair or poor health and individual and ward-level characteristics among four ethnic groups (Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi, and white) in the U.K (Karlsen, et al. 2002). The results of the factor analysis suggested three underlying dimensions of perception of quality of the local area, related to the quality of the local environment, the provision of local amenities and local problems of crime and nuisance. The findings suggest that there is no ethnic density effect on self-assessed health for ethnic minority groups.

Miller's (1995) interviewees had no formalised system of antenatal care in Bangladesh but on arrival in the U.K. were confronted with a highly developed system of preventative antenatal care, alien in many respects to their previous experiences. In this study the religious beliefs and cultural practices of Bangladeshi women were explored to see how they may influence the take up of antenatal services (Miller 1995). In turn, the boundaries between traditionally "private" (domestic and female) and "'public" (wider, professionally defined) spheres were considered, and the implications of this for "control" in pregnancy and childbearing were explored. The result showed that the women interviewed had attended antenatal clinics, and that whilst some shifts in the boundaries between "private" and "public" spheres were accepted, others had been rejected, and "control" retained.

Patel, et al. (2001) found that there are major differences in awareness of obesity in South Asian women. Known diabetic patients could be expected to have more realistic body weight perception as a result of diabetes education (Patel, et al. 2001).

Chew-Graham et al. (2002) report an investigation of the self-reported needs of South Asian women suffering distress and mental health problems which may lead to self-harm and suicide, and they use their data to define indicators of good practice for primary care. Islam and the concept of izzat (honour) in Asian family life were seen as major influences on the lives of Asian women (Chew-Graham, et al. 2002). My research is also linked to the prevailing distress that causes FA&W among Bangladeshi women.

Duff et al. (2001) develop a reliable and valid questionnaire to evaluate satisfaction with maternity care in Sylheti-speaking Bangladeshi women. Women's views about maternity care were elicited by qualitative methods and measured quantitatively using the survey of Bangladeshi women's experience of maternity services (Duff, et al. 2001). The approach taken in developing this questionnaire provides a model for developing outcome measures for use with other minority ethnic communities. Health issues are also incorporated in my research and I tried to find relationship with other phenomena.

Dunne, et al. (2000) showed that maternal and foetal complications are increased when pregnancy is complicated by diabetes, and this may be further influenced by racial and cultural differences. This research examined foetal and maternal outcomes in Indo-Asian and Caucasian women attending the same antenatal diabetes service to see if there were any differences. Indo-Asian and Caucasian women were similar, with a take-home baby rate of 96% and 92%, respectively (Dunne, et al. 2000). Pre and post natal superstitions and complications were used locate and understand the origins of different FA&W.

Hayes, et al. (2002) think that the background differences in the level of physical activity between European, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations living in the U.K. might

contribute to differences in the prevalence of diabetes and cardiovascular disease risk markers that exist in these populations (Hayes, et al. 2002). In my research I have tried to explore different activities in relations to the heath situation which is also related to their different FA&W.

Barnett et al. (1999) determined the usefulness, acceptability and validity of the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) translated into Vietnamese and Arabic. Women of Arabic-speaking, Vietnamese and Anglo-Celtic background were recruited antenatally and interviewed at six weeks and six months postpartum. At each stage they completed translated versions of the EPDS and a General Health Questionnaire-30. At the two postpartum interviews, the anxiety and depression modules of the Diagnostic Interview Schedule (DIS) were completed in the appropriate language. There were no significant differences among the three groups on the EPDS, but the Vietnamese and Arabic speaking women scored significantly higher than the Anglo-Celtic subjects on the General Health Questionnaire. Fewer Vietnamese mothers met the criteria for major depression or anxiety disorder, and this difference was significant at six months postpartum (Barnett, et al. 1999). The EPDS translations were acceptable to the women and appear to be suitable screening instruments for postnatal distress and depression in these populations.

2.5 Research Gap

The above literature review gives a broad idea about the different aspects of gender based ethnic minority, especially Bangladeshi, women's situation. I also found the various papers helpful for designing and justifying my research, as a source for the theory and philosophy behind it, and, finally, in giving a clear understanding for identifying research gaps.

I found that there is a lack of work on Sylheti people as a subset of the Bangladeshis ethnic minority who are living in England and increasing in numbers day by day through chain family migration, as well through a high birth rate. There is a lack of in-depth work on the problems of Sylheti women, especially those indoors most of their lives. Gender discrimination is prominent, more specifically discrimination towards Sylheti women and girls in their own society. Their social and cultural prejudices and customs tend to degrade their position and confine them within the four walls of their parents' or husband's house. They are mainly busy in the kitchen or looking after children. Sylheti women are discriminated against from birth. When a female child is born, it is not regarded as a happy event. Instead of being delighted, members of family think that she has come to add their misery. Opportunity in the society and gender discrimination among their own culture and custom, as well as their lack of confidence, tells upon their mental, physical and psychological growth. Their health, education and movements are affected. The attitude of parents/husbands is the main obstacle to their empowerment. On the other hand, the girls are married off by their parents before they come of age. And in selecting the bridegroom their opinion is not sought. Even her marriage upsets her parents as a dowry has to be paid. Her parents try to find a husband from the village back home in Sylhet, even before she attains physical and mental maturity. Apart from this, the fear, anxiety and worry after migration to a new environment also affects her day to day life. All these issues of Sylheti families living in England deserves intensive, qualitative research work. My own work was conducted using different participatory research methods. The lack of research on socio-economic and cultural context of Bangladeshi women living in northeast England using such participatory social and cultural geographical methods was clearly identified.

CHAPTER THREE: STUDY AREA AND HISTORY

3.1 Introduction

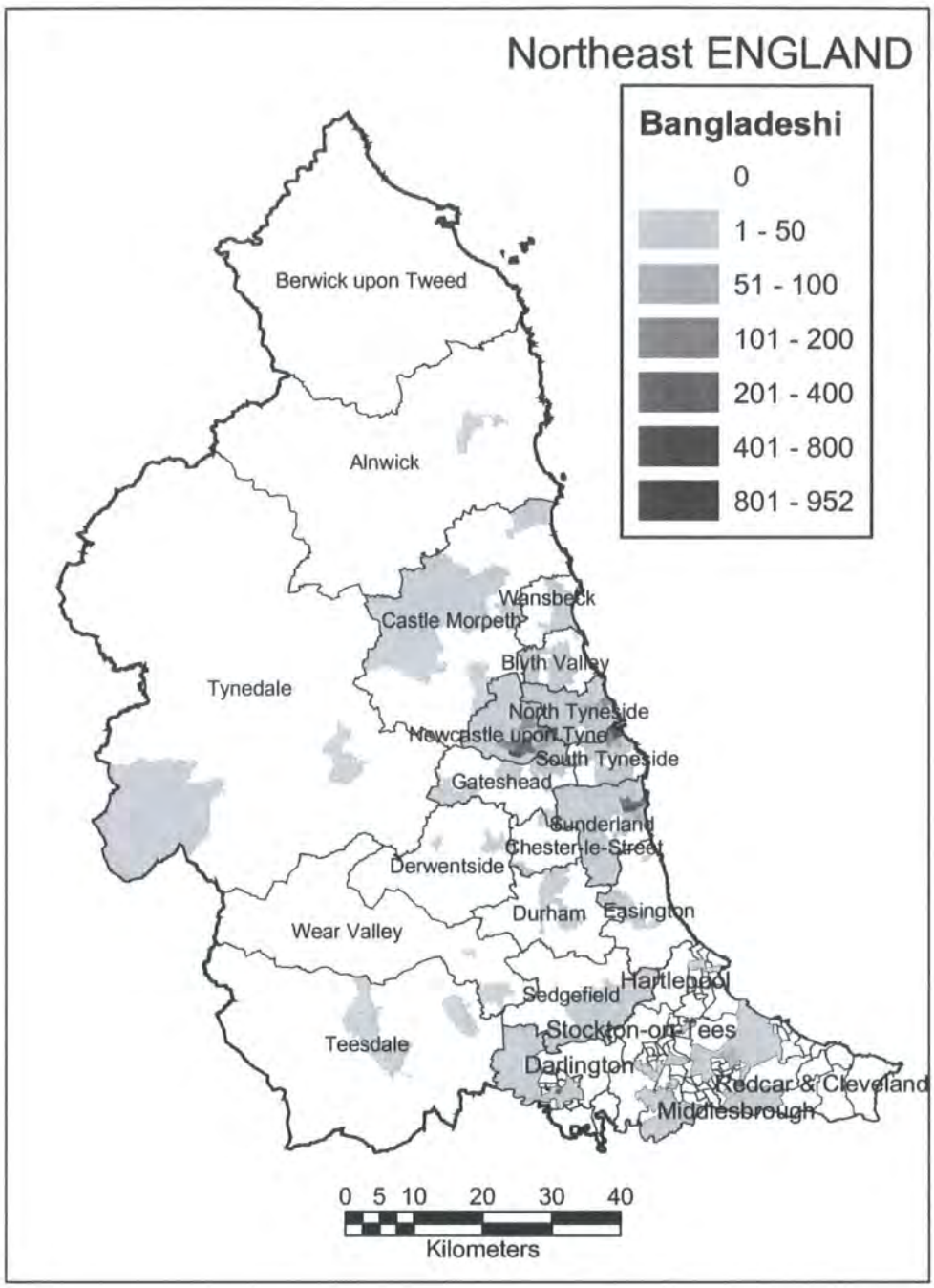
North East England is one of the nine regions of England. The region is also sometimes known by the alternative title of Northumbria, the name of the Anglian kingdom which was formed at the beginning of the 7th century and of the much smaller earldom which succeeded the kingdom (Lambert 2004). The name reflects that the southern limit to the kingdom's territory was the River Humber, and in the 12th century writings of Henry of Huntingdon the kingdom was defined as one of the Heptarchy of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms (http://en.wikipedia.org). At its peak the kingdom extended from the Humber to the Forth. The later earldom was bounded by the River Tees in the south and the River Tweed in the north (broadly similar to the modern North East England) and was recognised as part of England by the Anglo-Scottish Treaty of York in 1237.

The total area of the northeast region is 8,592 sq. km. This region has a total population of 2,515,479 with a density of 293 per sq. km according to the 2001 census. The region was originally defined as Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham, and Cleveland. Recently Tyne and Wear County Council has been abolished, Darlington has seceded from County Durham, and Cleveland was split into four. The region is now considered to consist of four distinct 'sub-regions': County Durham, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, and Tees Valley (former Cleveland plus Darlington). It is now divided into the following local government areas:

1. Northumberland (Northumberland)
2. Newcastle upon Tyne (Tyne and Wear)

3. Gateshead (Tyne and Wear)
4. North Tyneside (Tyne and Wear)
5. South Tyneside (Tyne and Wear)
6. Sunderland (Tyne and Wear)
7. Durham (Durham)
8. Darlington (Tees Valley)
9. Stockton-on-Tees (Tees Valley)
10. Hartlepool (Tees Valley)
11. Redcar and Cleveland (Tees Valley)
12. Middlesbrough (Tees Valley)

Figure 3.1 shows the spatial distribution of the Bangladeshi ethnic minority population in the different parts of the northeast region of England. The highest concentration is in Newcastle followed by Sunderland (Figure 3.1). In pursuance of my research, I made contact with Bangladeshi households and community centres in the North-east, specifically in Darlington, Durham, Newcastle, Sunderland and Teesside. The reason for the multiple sites was to get a broad view of Bangladeshi life in the region and to avoid any bias that might arise from studying any individual small community on its own.



Source: Data compiled from Government Office for the North-East of England (2003)

Figure 3.1 Distribution of Bangladeshi Population in North-East England.

Note: These are count data of the number of persons in each area.

3.2 Newcastle upon Tyne (Tyne and Wear)

Newcastle upon Tyne, often shortened to Newcastle, is a city in the county of Tyne and Wear. It is also a unitary authority with a population of around 259,000 (2001 census). The metropolitan boroughs of North Tyneside (population 190,000), South Tyneside (population 150,000) and Gateshead (population 200,000) are also part of the Newcastle conurbation. Newcastle is the main city in North East England, and around the 12th largest in England. Historically people from Newcastle have been known formally as Novocastrians, but 'Geordies' is more often used these days as an informal and even affectionate term for Newcastle's inhabitants, and people from Tyneside in general.

Newcastle's development as a major city owed much to its central role in the export of coal from the Northumberland coalfields. In the nineteenth century, shipbuilding and heavy engineering were central to the city's prosperity. Innovation in Newcastle and surrounding areas included the development of Safety lamps, Stephenson's Rocket, and Parsons' invention and commercialization of the steam turbine, leading to his ship, Turbinia. Mosley Street, in the centre of the City, is claimed to be the first in the world to have electric street lighting though this is contested. In the 20th century coal exports declined dramatically. The last coal mine within the boundaries of Newcastle closed in 1956. Shipbuilding has also dramatically declined (Lambert 2004).

After 1945, as manufacturing industry contracted, new service industries grew. More and more people were employed in public administration, retail and education. The Tyne itself passes through a gorge between Newcastle (on the North Bank) and Gateshead (the administratively separate Borough and urban area south of the river), which is famous for a

series of dramatic and notable bridges such as the Tyne Bridge and High Level Bridge shared by Newcastle and Gateshead. Large scale regeneration of the Tyne Gorge has replaced former shipping industries with imposing new office developments; an innovative and award-winning tilting bridge, the Gateshead Millennium Bridge; The Baltic art gallery; and the Sage Music Centre. Bangladeshi migrants started arriving in Newcastle in the early sixties to exploit new opportunities in the service sector. The first Indian restaurant was called 'Motiraj'.

3.3 Sunderland (Tyne and Wear)

Sunderland was once 'asunder-land', that is land cut asunder, separated or put to one side. A person born in Sunderland is sometimes called a 'Mackem', derived from the term Mak(e)'em and Tak(e)'em used by Tyneside shipbuilders to describe their counterparts on the River Wear in Sunderland when ship building was still present in the area. The term was originally meant to be derogatory, in that Sunderland made the ships, then the richer world took them away (Lambert 2004).

Sunderland developed on plateaux high above the river, and so never suffered from the problem of allowing people to cross the river without interrupting the passage of high masted vessels. During the 19th century ship-making boomed in Sunderland and the town became world famous for this industry. Other important industries were glass, pottery and rope making. Exports of coal also boomed. In the 19th century large amounts of coal were mined in Wearmouth (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newcastle_upon_Tyne).

Next to the North Sea, Sunderland was traditionally a major centre of the shipbuilding and coal mining industries, although the last shipyard closed in 1988 and the last coal mine in 1994 (Lambert 2004). As the traditional industries have declined, electronics, chemicals, and paper manufacture have replaced them. Some of these new industries, as well as the Nissan car plant, and the nearby North East Aircraft Museum are in Washington, which has more space to allow purpose-built factories. The service sector has countered the decline in heavy industry, and the town is home to many customer service telephone call centres, the quality of which means they have avoided the recent trend towards outsourcing overseas. Bangladeshi immigrants started living in cheap housing in Hendon in Sunderland from the late sixties and they have been engaged in the catering trade, mainly the curry take-away business.

As with most post-industrial towns in the North of England, Sunderland continues to suffer from multi-generational long term unemployment. As a result the linked social factors of crime, poor health and teenage pregnancy are high in certain wards of the City (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newcastle_upon_Tyne). Sunderland is also victim to a degree of population exodus resulting in an ageing population. Sunderland has also suffered with the regional economic strategy promoting nearby Newcastle and Gateshead as services and leisure centres leading higher income employees to reside outside of the Sunderland area.

Sunderland Corporation's massive post-war housing estate developments, such as Pennywell, Grindon, Red House, Hylton Castle, Thorney Close and Town End Farm, together with earlier developments, have all passed into the ownership of the Sunderland Housing Group This a private company, and a Registered Social Landlord (Lambert 2004). Since the housing stock transfer in 2000, there have been considerable improvements to the quality of social housing in the city. The tower blocks at Gilley Law and in Hendon and the

East End have been transformed, and the vast estates are also improving, although the plans have not met with universal praise.

3.4 Durham City (County Durham)

The name Durham means hill on an island. It comes from the old English words dun, meaning hill, and holm, meaning island (Lambert 2004). A church was built for the monks who looked after the body of St Cuthbert and this continued to act as a magnet for visitors. Soon a town grew up on the site. It was an ideal site for a town as it was easy to defend and it had a major 'tourist attraction'. The Scots attacked Durham twice, in 1006 and 1038, but both times they were driven off (Lambert 2004).

Durham is a county town. The county is one of contrasts, with the remote and sparsely populated dales and moors of the Pennines characterise the interior; while nearer the coast the county is highly urbanised, and was once dominated by the coal mining industry. County Durham is roughly bounded by the watershed of the Pennines in the west, the River Tees in the south, the North Sea in the east and the Rivers Tyne and Derwent in the north. The county traditionally extends to the south bank of the River Tyne and includes Sunderland, South Shields, and Gateshead. It borders the counties of Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmorland and Yorkshire. The east of the county between the Ryhope district of Sunderland and Seaton Carew in Hartlepool is the coastline of the North Sea.

At the time of the first census in 1801 Durham City had a population of about 7,500. The industrial revolution largely passed the city by, although, in the 19th century it was famous for organ-making and carpets. Other industries were brewing and paper mills. Although there was little industry in Durham the population rose significantly in the early 19th century. By 1821 it was 9,800. By the mid 19th century it had reached 14,000. Growth then

slowed dramatically. In 1901 the population of Durham was about 16,000. The population of Durham had risen to around 24,000 according to 2001 census. In 2005 the population of Durham City is approximately 27,000 and 81,000 for the District (Lambert 2004). Bangladeshi immigrants only started living here very recently, the first family arrived in 1980 though they had already started their Indian take way and restaurant business while commuting from Newcastle.

3.5 Darlington (Tees Valley)

Darlington began as a Saxon village. It first appeared in writing in the early 11th century when it was called Dearthingtun (Lambert 2004). This place name means the farm or hamlet (tun) of the people (ingas) of a man named Deaornoth. Darlington is now an industrial town with a resident population (2003) of 98,210 (http://en.wikipedia.org). It has an attractive historic market area in the town centre and is famed for its associations with the birth of railways. The world's first ever passenger rail journey was between Shildon (via Darlington) and nearby Stockton-on-Tees on the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1825 (Lambert 2004).

The Bangladeshi immigrants who started living in this city were most probably the earliest in the Northeast, around the beginning of the 1960s. They were engaged in the grocery and Indian food business.

3.6 Middlesbrough (Tees Valley)

Middlesbrough is a town and district in North-East England, with a resident population in 2001 of 134,855. The 2005 mid-year estimates suggest a population of 140,240 (http://en.wikipedia.org). However what is locally perceived as Middlesbrough, with the inclusion of Normanby, Ormesby, Grangetown and South Bank (which are actually part of neighbouring Redcar) has a resident population of 181,630 (2005). Middlesbrough lies at the heart of the Teesside and Hartlepool urban area, which has 492,880 residents.

Middlesbrough is historically part of the North Riding of Yorkshire, but in 1974 it became part of the new administrative county of Cleveland, though persons born in Middlesbrough during this time are still counted as Yorkshiremen and women. In 1996 Cleveland was abolished. Middlesbrough became a unitary authority though it remained part of North Yorkshire for ceremonial and postal address purposes (Lambert 2004).

Although often thought of as a settlement with no early history, the name Middlesbrough can trace its roots back a long way. Mydilsburgh is the earliest recorded form of the name and the element 'burgh' denotes an ancient fort or settlement of pre-Saxon origin (http://en.wikipedia.org).

Over the past decade Middlesbrough has ranked amongst the 10 worst districts for aquisitive crime rates in the whole of England, peaking at 4th place behind Manchester, Nottingham, Kingston upon Hull and parts of Inner London. However recent increases in the numbers of community service officers have helped to reduce crime, particularly property crime and robbery. Until recently, Bangladeshi immigrants have mainly resided at South Bank, one of Middlesbrough's poorest and most troubled districts, but they are now moving out due to urban regeneration.

3.7 Justification of Study Area

Every piece of empirical quantitative and qualitative research in geography needs a study site. There are different statistical methods that can be used for study site selection (Baxter and Eyles 1997; Curtis, et al. 2000; Kuzel 1992; Miles and Huberman 1994; Patton 1990; Stake 1994; Trost 1986; Wainwright 1997). Generally, the selection of study area is influenced by the theoretical framework of the research questions or based on the philosophy and theory of the study aims and objectives, which direct the data sources and types (Curtis, et al. 2000).

The study area and places for field data collection were chosen by keeping in mind the following points.

1. Convenient access to the field.
2. Representative concentration of community.
3. Time table and plan of research.
4. Unbiased representation of respondents.

3.8 Historical Background of Sylheti Migrants

Bangladeshis are relatively recent migrants to the United Kingdom, and come from predominantly rural areas. Although the first generation to arrive in the UK came during the economic boom years of the early 1960s; this group consisted almost entirely of unskilled young men. Their dependents came to settle much later – during the 1980s. Many of these families were transplanted into hostile British inner cities from rural communities in Bangladesh with poor educational resources, no identifiable tradition of secondary and higher education. Most arrived with limited language skills, indeed many lacked basic literacy even in their native Bengali.

The Bangladeshi population in Britain is a significant group within the ethnic minority population, and was identified as the 'youngest and fastest growing of all the ethnic populations recorded in the 1991 Census of Great Britain' (Eade, et al. 1996). Although the distinctiveness of the Bangladeshi community, as compared with other South Asian groups, has been acknowledged, variations according to region, age cohort, social class and gender have been given rather less attention. However, differences are likely to increase over time, especially in respect of variations between women and men, and between age groups (Gardner 2002; Gardner and Shukur 1994).

Most Bangladeshis in Britain originate from the Sylhet district in the north-east of the country, which, after the Punjab and Gujarat, has been the third largest source of immigration from South Asia (Ballard 1994). Sylhet, although more prosperous than other parts of Bangladesh, is significantly poorer in comparison to the other two areas - a fact that has had long-term implications for patterns of adjustment by migrants in the U.K. (Ballard 1994; Gardner 1995). First generation migrants spoke a variety of dialects and

there was a low standard of literacy in standard Bengali (Kershen 2000). In respect to religion, Sunni Muslims formed the majority. Most migrants came from a network of rural villages within the region and in respect of social origins were drawn mainly from peasant farming families. Gardner and Shukur (1994) comment that:

"Such owner-occupiers formed a distinct rural class, and when the opportunities for overseas migration appeared they were in a better position to raise the capital outlay for their fares, if necessary by mortgaging their land. In sharp contrast to landless families where every pair of hands was vital for day to-day production either through subsistence agriculture or wage-earning, landowning households could often spare the labour of one or even two of its young men. Their greater financial independence also meant that they were more accustomed to thinking of long-term investment, enterprise and profit than their landless neighbours".

The Permanent Settlement Act 1793 which created the class of zamindars (large landowners) and raiyats (peasants) excluded the Sylhetis and made them into talukdars (smallholders), rather than mere cultivators of the land, paying taxes directly to the British administration. It is argued that the sense of financial and psychological independence conferred by this status has proved crucial to migration and survival abroad but in reality the lack of profit in selling rice to manipulated market conditions combined with proud refusal to take paid employment had its effect in encouraging migration to Britain (Ballard 1994).

The earliest arrivals from Sylhet can be traced back at least to the 19th century were invariably seamen or 'lascars' employed on Britain's mercantile fleet. Some stayed in Britain on a temporary basis waiting to secure a return passage - usually on a ship bound for India. However, others stayed for longer periods, in some cases, living with or marrying local white women and establishing a home usually in areas close to the ports from which they had embarked (Eade 1997) .

The first oral accounts from Bengali lascars who came here before and during the Second World War suggest an increase not only of those employed on British ships but also in the number of sailors who 'jumped ship' and found work in cities across the country. Some of these sailors stayed for long periods of their adult lives in urban neighbourhoods where they found the essentials for a distinctive community life through lodging houses, cafes, restaurants and other small businesses as well as the establishment of religious facilities.

By the 1940s, larger numbers of Bangladeshis were beginning to search for employment in factories and restaurants in various parts of England. Choudhury (1993) records around 400 Bangladeshis from Sylhet living in London mainly the East End during the 1940s. He notes that these early job seekers, predominantly male, often found it hard to secure employment, with many moving to the Midlands and the North of England to work in the manufacturing and textiles industries (Choudhury 1993). Eade (1999) suggests that by the 1960s there were approximately 6,000 Bangladeshi men scattered across different urban centres in England (Eade 1999).

Adams (1987) and Choudhury (1995) both provide details of Sylhetis working as merchant seaman and their settlement in Britain starting from the First World War. These early sailors' experiences captured the imagination of Sylheti villagers and provided an incentive for many in Sylhet to travel abroad (Adams 1987; Ali 2002; Choudhury 1995). Those who could afford to travel were from small landholding, middle-income families from areas like Maulvi Bazar, Biswanath and Beani Bazar (Carey and Shukur 1985-86). The seamen came to settle in England in port areas such as South Shields, Cardiff and Tilbury. The areas of migration for later generations became concentrated around the 'seaman's zone', later to be called 'Londoni zone'.

These seamen were the first group to establish institutions in England, some of which were instrumental in helping many Sylhetis come abroad. The restaurant trade started in the 1930s, many cooks having gained their experience from merchant ships. In due course the Pakistan Caterers Association was set up and provided written references for Sylhetis not only to come over but also to obtain work (Ali 2002). In post colonial India no more work was to be found on the ships. Bangladeshis exercising their rights as Commonwealth citizens to come and work in Britain encountered barriers set up by the Pakistani administration.

In the days of the post-war economic boom when labour was urgently required in the factories and mills of Britain as well as the transport and health services, there were no restrictions from the British side. The restrictions all came from the Pakistan government, which made it known that it was shameful and demeaning for Pakistani citizens to 'go to Britain for labour', and ceased to issue passports in East Pakistan (Adams 1987). The Commonwealth Act 1962 created a voucher system without which migration could not take

place. Sylheti Bangladeshis came over mainly on Category 'C' vouchers (Ali 2002). These were discontinued in 1964/5, effectively stopping any further primary migration.

Like other economic migrants Bangladeshis settled in poor inner city areas. The arrival of migrants in large numbers exacerbated the housing crisis there and they found themselves being blamed for this even though they lived in housing in marginal areas with some even being under slum clearance demolition programmes. In their attempts to buy houses they found themselves discriminated against by estate agents, private landlords and local authorities (Mason 1995, 81). Desai (1963) wrote of the condition of houses of this period:

"The house more often than not will be in a dilapidated condition. The curtains usually are of cheap prints and netting, and the tenant's bedroom may contain a solitary chair, no table and a shared wardrobe, so that a large part of the tenant's personal belongings are stored in a suitcase kept underneath his bed. The naked light bulbs, a small electric heater, the two or more beds, cheap patterned paper on the walls and equally cheap linoleum in the bedroom are evidence of Spartan living (Desai 1963)."

In earlier times merchant seaman were involved in the peddling trade but now the Indians ended up running this and the retail clothing business. By 1960 25-30 wholesale establishments were being run by Indians in the East End and this meant that some Bengalis found themselves employed by other Asians (Desai 1963; Hiro 1971). The Bengalis took work mainly in factories, doing assembly line work or operating machinery. Like other migrants they took all of the overtime work available.

In the work environment the Asians were grouped together rather than dispersed amongst the general workforce. In and out of work the Asian made separate provisions for leisure if any. English workers kept their distance and, over time, stereotypes of each group reinforced separation (Ali 2002). Desai (1963) wrote:

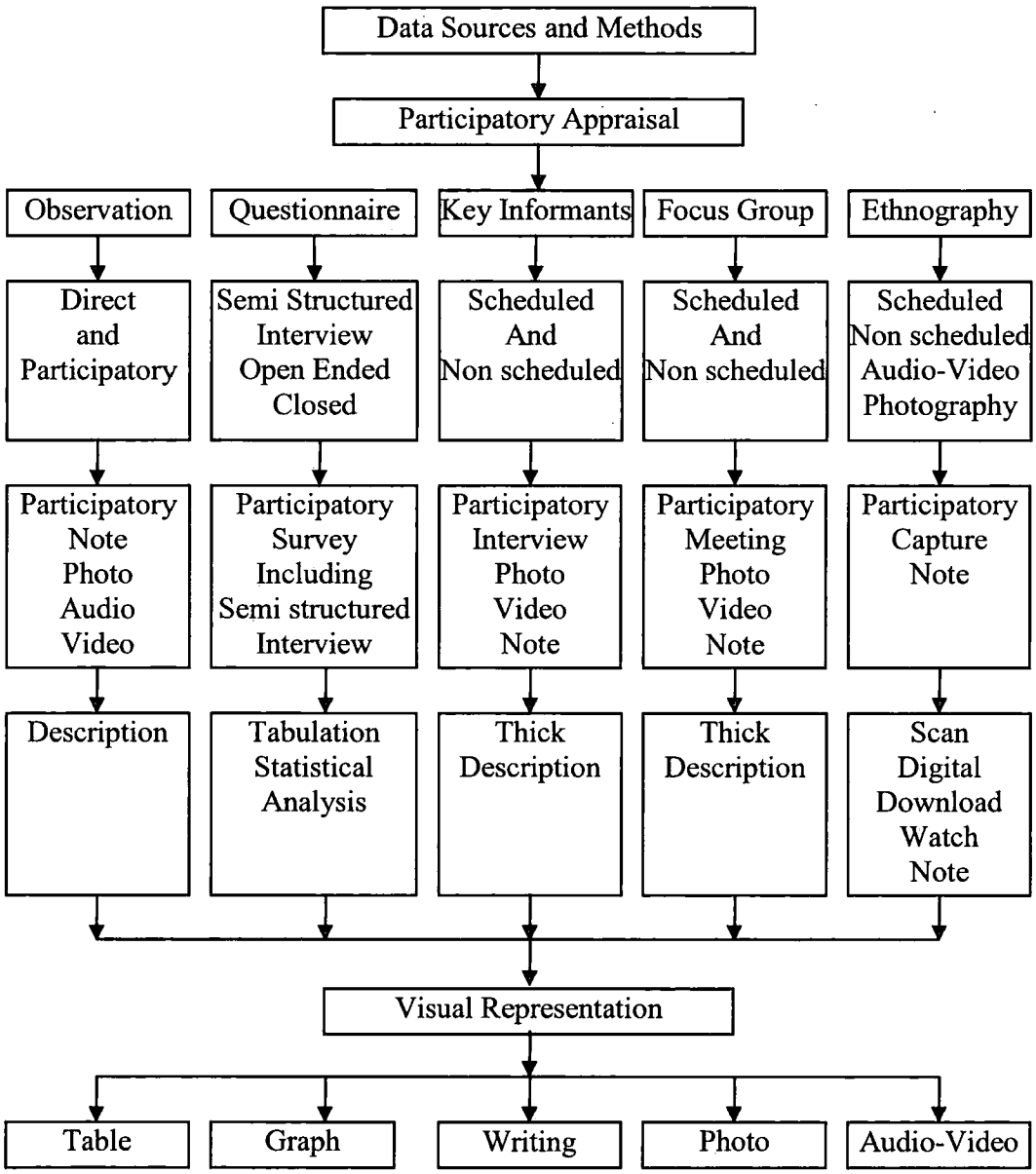
"Total participation would require from the immigrants varied and extensive cultural change. In fact most of them accept only those cultural changes which are the minimum condition for making money (Desai 1963)"

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

4.1 Sources of Data

Secondary sources of data from books, journals, reports and the internet will be used and reviewed for the research. Primary qualitative and quantitative data will be collected through participatory observation, focus group meetings and discussion, a questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews. After careful consideration, and some pilot work with my existing contacts, I have decided upon the following methods of data collection: participatory appraisal; focus groups; questionnaires; semi-structured interviewing; and visual ethnography.

4.2 Methodology



Source: Author (2005)

Figure 4.1 Schematic diagram for research Methodology.

4.2.1 Participatory Appraisal (PA)

Participatory Appraisal is a term used for community research and consultation, which involves local people at all stages, from priority setting to solution implementation, and emphasizes education and collective action as well as research (Pain 2005).

4.2.1.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation involves spending time living, working or being with people or communities in order to understand contextual factors (Laurier 2003). In other words, it is, as the name implies a method based on participating and observing, in which notes (writing and audio-video) are used as a method of data collection and interpretation. The basis of my approach has been to get close to, and stay in touch with, the women in the Bangladeshi ethnic minority in the North-East England. This methodology is quite distinct from others which emphasize distance and objectivity.

Initially I had to visit most of the places in northeast England where the Bangladeshi migrants are concentrated for participant observation. I took the brief notes for each place and also used photographic and video equipment. This gave me better understanding in drawing boundaries for my research, especially in the selection of study areas for fieldwork.

Participant observation took place throughout my fieldwork and I combined it for collecting data and information with other methods described in the next section.

4.2.1.2 Key informants

This approach required the careful identification of a select group of formal and informal leaders, influential leaders or experts. It provided for structured contact with these informants, usually through direct interviews or a focus group format (http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/progdev/pdf/keyinform.pdf). It was desirable to ensure that the key informants represented Bangladeshi women and each value orientation and had knowledge between them of all of the key groups in the study area (http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/progdev/pdf/keyinform.pdf). There are formal and informal leaders in the Bangladeshi community and some community workers who have been associated with this community for long periods helped to provide background on socio-economic and cultural issues. These leaders were able to give information on the existing structures and contacts in the community, give their perspective on community perceptions and needs, and provide direction for data collection. (http://pabcerf.psu.edu/Key_interview_form.pdf).

4.2.1.3 Focus Group Meetings

Focus group meetings are part of the family of qualitative methods which enable people to share, enhance and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor and evaluate their surroundings/environment and cultural practice. Its extensive and growing menu of methods includes visuals such as mapping and diagramming. I used this method for collecting qualitative data and for interpreting quantitative information on different aspects of Bangladeshi women's lives. Several focus group meetings involved a group discussion of a topic, e.g. fear and anxiety. According to some writers (Stewart and Shamdasani 1998) focus group meetings are particularly useful for exploratory research when rather little is known about the phenomena of interest. As a result, focus groups tend to be used very early in the research and are often followed by other types of research that provide more quantifiable data from larger groups of respondents. Although focus groups can produce quantitative data, they are usually carried out for the collection of primary qualitative data. Focus groups have also proven useful in the analysis of large-scale quantitative surveys (Stewart and Shamdasani 1998). In my research they facilitated interpretation of quantitative results and added depth to the responses obtained in the questionnaires and interviews.

(Dale 2002) used semi structured interviews and focus group meetings to explore some of the processes that influence access to higher education and employment for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Britain.

4.2.1.4 Questionnaire Survey

Interacting with and talking to people who are the object of the study can take many forms, but perhaps the most common way in which geographers have obtained information from individuals has been via questionnaire surveys (Robinson 1998). Questionnaire surveys provide both quantitative and qualitative data. The use of questionnaires in geographical research was popularised when the analysis of people's geographical perceptions became a major part of behavioural geography in the early 1970s (Bickman and Rog 1998; Denzin and Lincoln 1994; Limb and Dwyer 2001; Maxwell 1996; Rubin and Rubin 1995). Subsequently they were used across a broad spectrum of human geography research as a key means of obtaining information from target groups within the population of the study area (Robinson 1998). One advantage of this method is that it can produce data that can be analysed by standard procedures.

This is a research method for gathering information about the characteristics, behaviours, and attitudes of a population by administering a standardized set of questions to a sample of individuals (McLafferty 2003). In my research an in-depth questionnaire survey was conducted among Bangladeshi women in order to explore their perceptions, attitudes, experiences, behaviours, and spatial interaction in diverse place contexts according to certain objectives. I was careful in preparing the questionnaire to keep it simple, avoid complex phrases, long words, jargon and specialized technical terms that might confuse. Open ended questions allowed participants to craft their own responses, and a number of closed or fixed responses yielded key factual information that was helpful in targeting objectives.

Duff et al. (2001) developed a reliable and valid questionnaire to evaluate satisfaction with maternity care in Sylheti-speaking Bangladeshi women. Pain (1997) used a twofold methodology for the research on women's fear of violent crime (FOVC). A self-report postal questionnaire survey was employed as a cost- and time-effective means of surveying a representative sample, while also allowing anonymity and privacy. The 389 returned questionnaires (72 per cent) out of 600 sent out were supplemented by 45 follow-up, in-depth interviews with a sub-sample from those returned. These methods successfully demonstrated the spatial patterns of women's fear of violent crime and examined how other social identities mediate its extent and impact.

I have also conducted 47 in-depth questionnaire surveys combined with semi structured interviews. It was very fruitful for gathering vast amount of data for analysis. The only limitation was that it was very time-consuming to complete one full questionnaire combined with a participatory semi structured interview. Getting appointments was also difficult. Even once the appointment was set there were problems of starting on time. Once started the questionnaire and interview took several minutes for ice breaking and making them come to the exact points of interest. Sometimes it was very difficult to get the appropriate information and it was necessary to cross check with other data.

4.2.1.6 Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews as advocated by many researchers of gender, race and ethnicity (Dale, et al. 2002a; Hennink, et al. 1999; Khanum 2001; Pain 1997). A semi-structured interview is a verbal interchange where one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information from another person by asking questions (Longhurst 2003). I prepared a list of predetermined questions, keeping the objectives of my research in mind, but this method also unfolded in a conversational manner, offering participants a chance to explore issues they felt were importantly relevant to my research.

Hennink et al (1999) investigated social and cultural aspects of 'teenage life' among south Asian girls in Britain, particularly their experiences of relationships with boys and the extent to which they become involved in sexual activities using in-depth interviews. Khanum (2001) used semi-structured interviews to explore and describe the changing pattern of household composition among Bangladeshis in England.

My participatory semi structured interview was combined with an in-depth questionnaire survey. This combined method helped in digging out lots of vital information and data, even when I didn't manage to collect much through the questionnaire survey alone. I have found while working with women from ethnic minorities that it is better to start talking with them about their circumstances and those of the family members for the purposes of ice breaking and then to go to the exact point slowly. I have found that combined participatory methods were very helpful in this regard. Although it was very time-consuming to complete the questionnaire, I had no alternative. Occasionally when I left questionnaires to be completed I was disappointed that they did not understand properly what to write or answer.

4.2.2 Visual Ethnography

Apart from the methods described above, I also engaged with Visual Ethnography in order to accumulate further, complementary information. This method provides a visual (audio-video) description and interpretation of social behavior of an entire culture or subculture. In the 1970s, humanist geographers began to incorporate ethnographic methods into their research as a reaction to positivist geographers' general lack of concern with the complexities of different people's experiences of everyday social and cultural processes (Cook and Crang 1995). Visual Ethnography is a modern method that gives the flexibility of watching or listening to the information several times and in-depth. It became popular after the innovation of high quality and user-friendly personal audio-video devices. The data captured on those devices can cost-effectively be downloaded into a computer system for transcribing and narrating and finally analyzing.

My participatory visual ethnography method was vital as it used audio-video devices. Whenever I was in the field I tried to capture a selection of situations with my camera, video recorder or voice audio recorder. During participatory focus group meetings, for instance, I captured whole sessions on video. The reader is invited to view this footage, which is attached in the appendix on compact video disc, although please note that the conversation is in Bengali.

4.3 Conclusion

This research was conducted using different qualitative research methods, including participant observation, in-depth questionnaire survey, semi-structured interviews, focus group meetings, interviewing key informants and visual ethnography. The lack of research on socio-economic and cultural context of Bangladeshi women living in northeast England using such qualitative/participatory social and cultural geographical methods was clearly identified through an extensive literature review.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

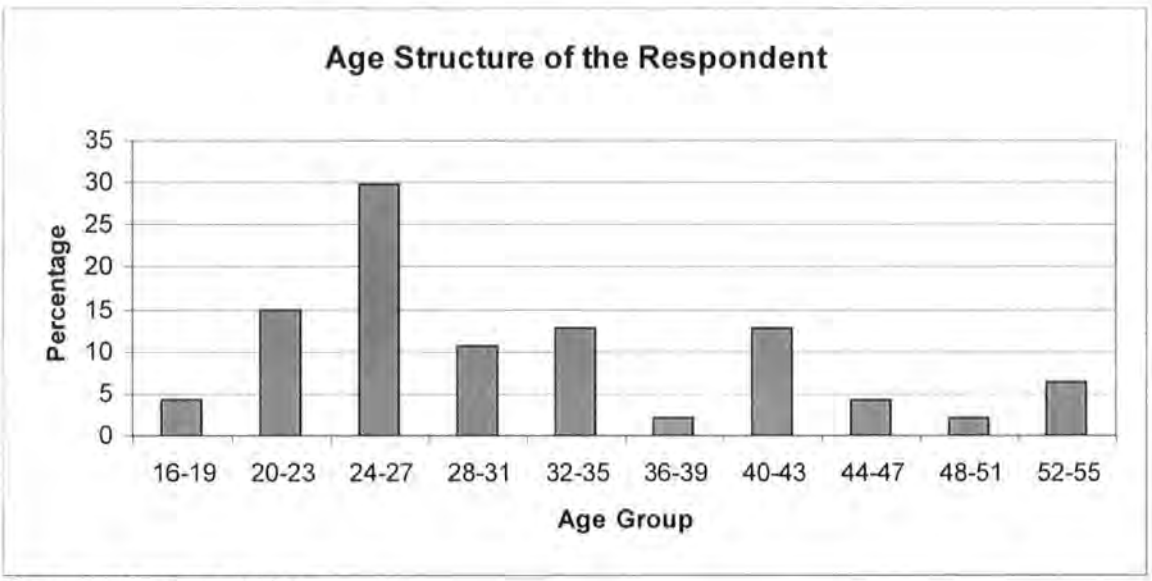
5.1 Introduction

Primary data in the empirical research was collected through various participatory methods and analysed using different qualitative and quantitative approaches. Information from participatory observation has been analysed through note taking and written descriptions, using examples where appropriate. Data from the in-depth questionnaire survey in conjunction with the semi-structured interviews has been analysed using different statistical techniques and results have been visually presented and discussed. Information gathered from participatory focus group meetings and key informants has been analysed and the results discussed using the 'thick description' method. The visual ethnographical audio-video data has yielded useful examples and is presented in photographic still and video formats on the attached compact disk.

This section will describe some of the personal details of the respondents who took part in the combined participatory questionnaire and semi-structured interview. It will give an overview of the participants' characteristics and level of understanding in the greater community for their own development. 47 women from five part of the North East of England (Darlington, Durham, Newcastle, Sunderland and Teesside) agreed to take part in my research and generally speaking they were willing to divulge often sensitive information that helped in my understanding of their position in the broader socio-economic and cultural contexts.

5.2 Age Structure

I tried to incorporate a wide spectrum of ages in my survey in order to understand the full range of women's issues across the life cycle. Figure 5.1 shows the age structure of the respondents. The lower limit is 16 years, as the tradition remains of early marriages in the age group 16-19 years, but the most numerous were those 24-27 years, followed by 20-23 years. Together these groups were the most vulnerable in the community and comparatively the most outspoken. Many difficulties and responsibilities are faced by the women aged between 20 and 35 and they represented a major portion of my research. Also the elderly and middle aged women contributed valuable information.

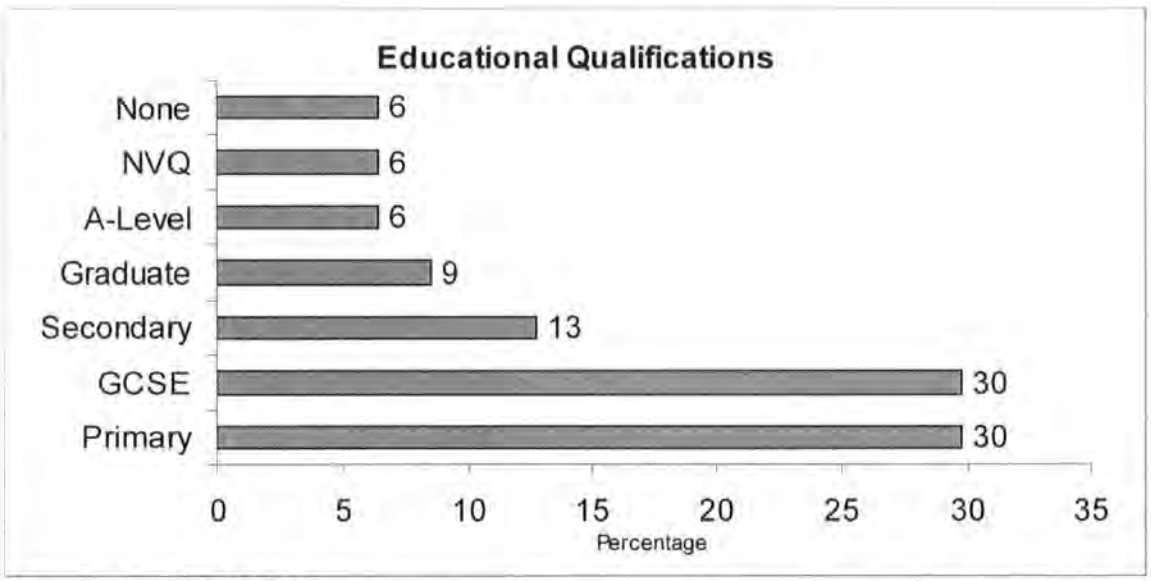


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.1 Age Structure of the Respondents.

5.3 Educational Qualifications

Educational qualifications, ranging from illiterates to graduates (Figure 5.2), are indicative of a number of issues. As expected, I found that educated women had a fuller understanding of their socio-economic and cultural context and were better able to communicate their hopes and concerns. But, as the Figure indicates, more than a third had not progressed beyond primary school and some had only a functional illiteracy in written English. Although it is obvious to everyone that women in this community are behind in education, they are not encouraged by their families to gain higher qualifications.



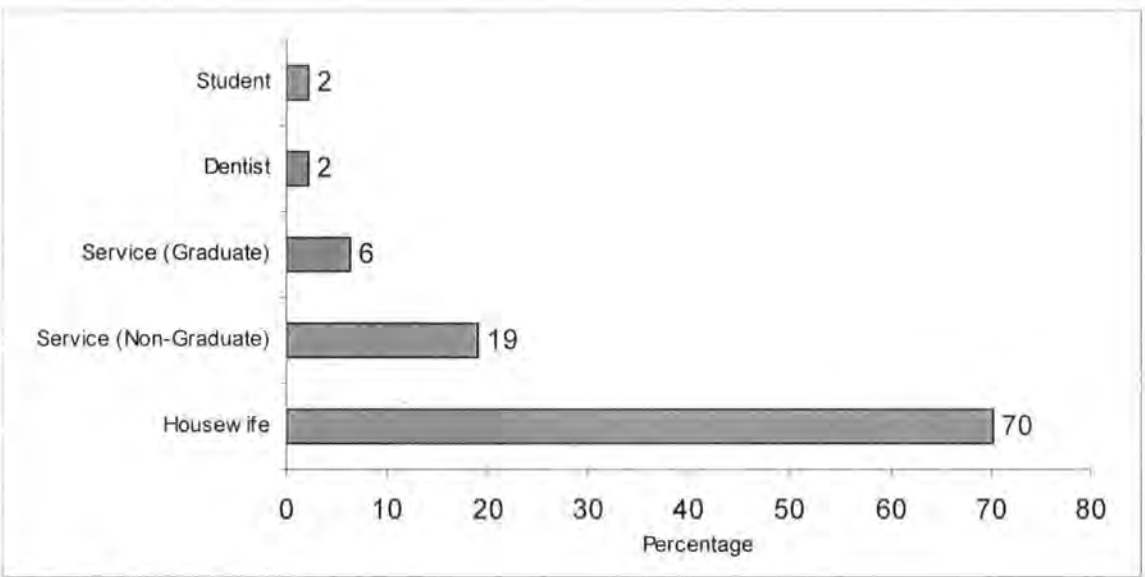
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.2 Educational Qualifications of the Respondents.

On a technical point, most of the women I interviewed had migrated as adults from the Sylhet district of Bangladesh and their educational attainment has therefore been translated into British equivalents for greater understanding. All of the primary education was in Bangladesh, and about half of the GCSE & 'A' Levels (Bangladeshi Secondary School Certificate and Higher Secondary School Certificate), but all of the NVQs and degree-level qualifications are from British institutions.

5.4 Occupation

There very little divergence of occupation among women in this community. The majority are housewives and concentrate on household work (Figure 5.3). Those who are on non-graduate part-time jobs are mainly working as Bi-lingual Teaching Assistants and Dinner Ladies in their children's schools. Some are also working as freelance interpreters and community workers.



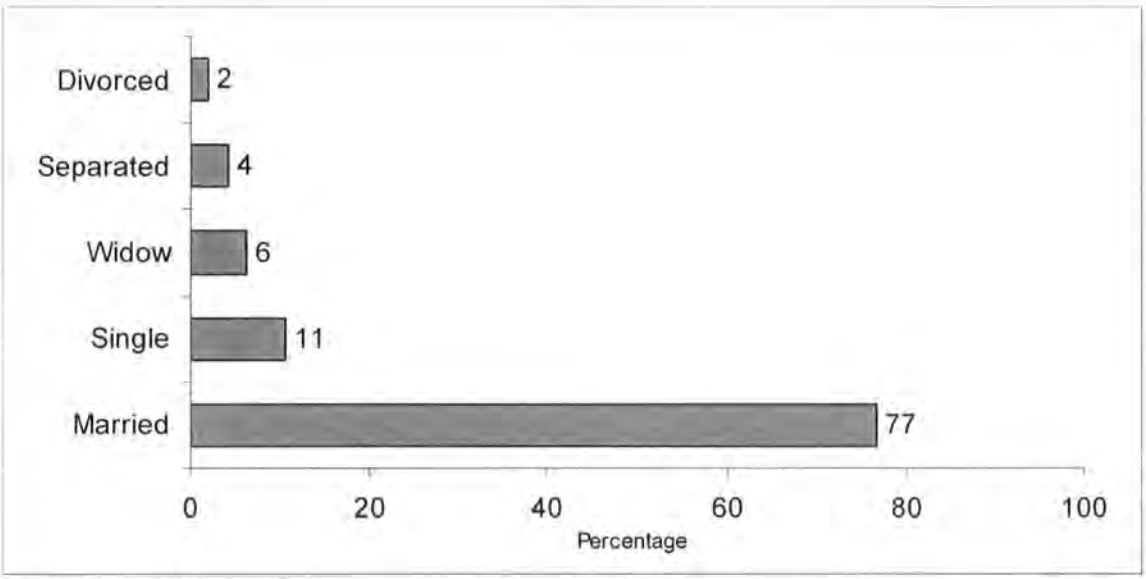
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.3 Occupations of the respondents.

Graduate jobs are mainly as project officers in the city council, along with an executive in aviation sales and a couple of dentists. Only one is in full-time education. Most of their male next of kin are one way or another engaged in the 'Indian' food industry (restaurant or takeaway) as proprietor, chef or waiter.

5.5 Marital Status

I have elicited information from women of different marital statuses. Most of them are married, including a few who are in their second marriage (Figure 5.4). The survey was also conducted among widowed, separated and divorced women and I gathered much valuable information from them. In addition, a number of single women contributed views and comments on issues regarding the socio-economy and cultural phenomena in their community.

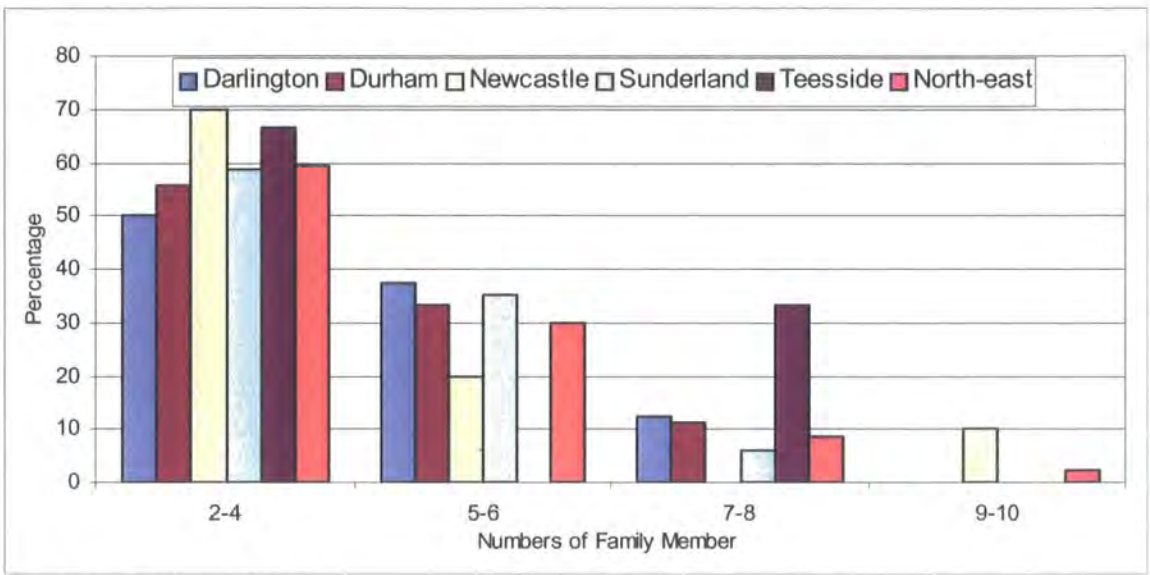


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.4 Marital statuses of the respondents.

5.6 Family members

Most of the respondents were used to living in extended families in Bangladesh but, upon migration to Britain, they started living in nuclear units. Close family connections were maintained by living close together in a certain residential area.



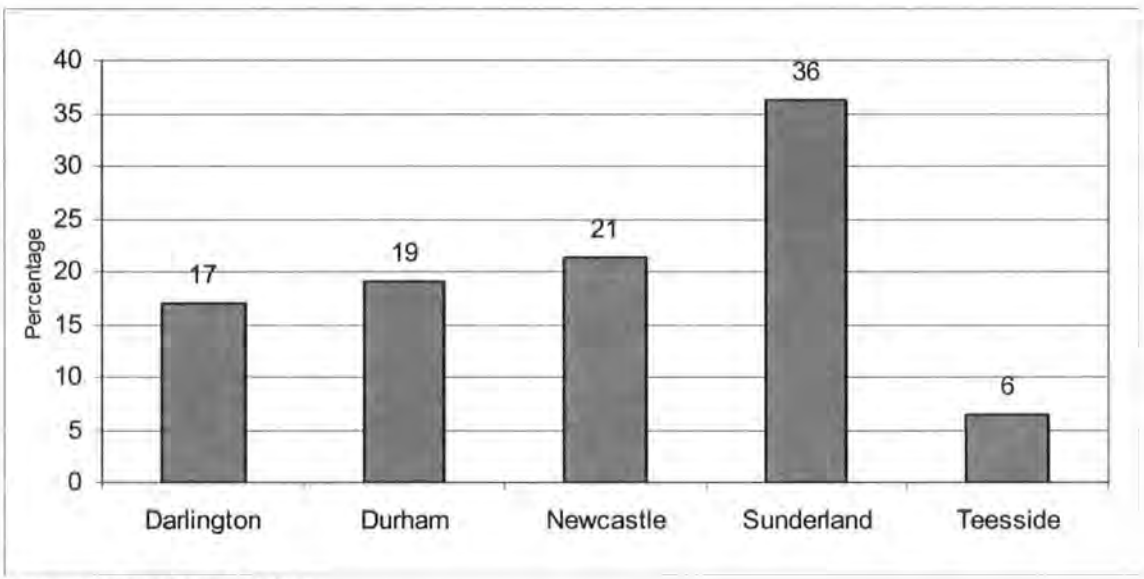
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.5 Family members numbers of the respondents.

Most of these nuclear families comprise 2-4 members or 5-6 (Figure 5.5). There were a few respondents from extended families of 7-8 or 9-10 members. Newcastle has the most families with nuclear status. Teesside, Darlington and Sunderland are the areas where extended families with larger numbers were surveyed.

5.7 Residences

The survey was conducted across North East England. The largest number of respondents was from Sunderland (Figure 5.6). This area has special characteristics as most had migrated from one village, Syedpur in Sylhet, to the Hendon area, where they remain a close-knit community. Both Sunderland and Newcastle have their own Bangladeshi community centres.



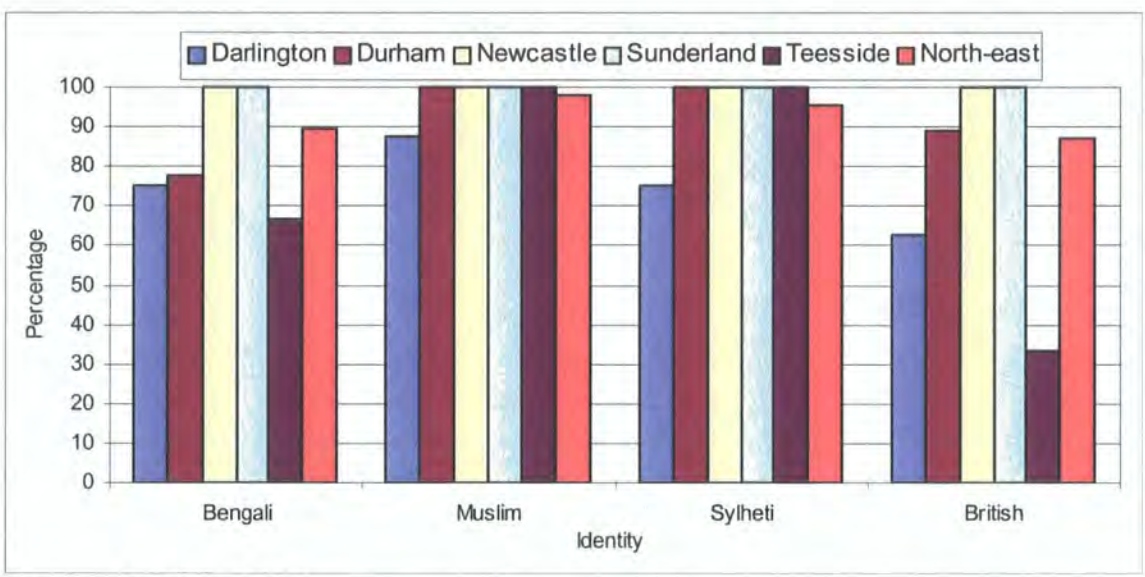
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.6 Residences of Respondents.

The respondents from the Durham areas are more scattered, living at High Shincliffe, Newton Hall, Farmwellgate Moor and Sacriston. Other respondents came from Northgate (Darlington), Fenham (Newcastle). In the case of Middlesbrough, most of my interviewees were from Southbank, although the Bangladeshi community is now moving out of this neighbourhood due to regeneration.

5.8 Identity and Language

Most of the respondents expressed their identity as Bengali, Muslim, Sylheti and British (Figure 5.7). The Bengali identity is generally linguistic rather than nationalistic, but this is nuanced by Sylhet having its own distinctive dialect, and for some this is another important focus of identity, distinguishing them from the broader Bangladeshi community. Religion is also important, as expected, and the most common hybrid identity is Muslim/Sylheti.

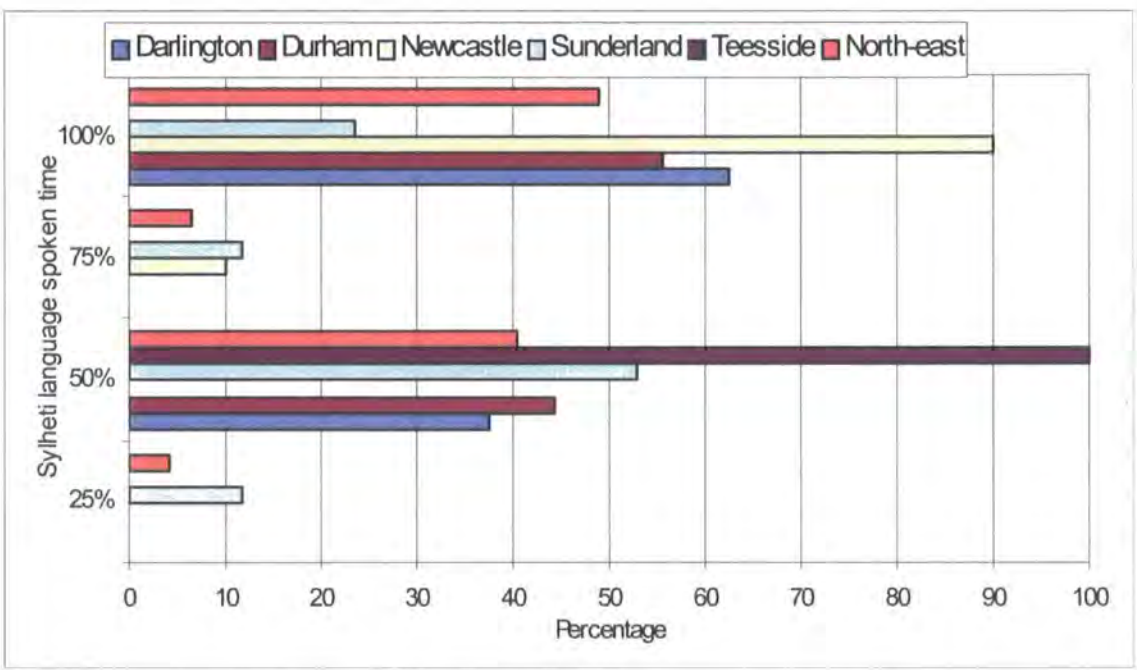


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.7 Identities of Respondents.

98 per cent of respondents to the questions regarding their most preferred identity singled out 'Muslim'. Most of these women claimed to be devout and practising Muslims and, although there are strong community pressures to conform to religious expectations, it was stressed to them that the questionnaires were anonymous and non-judgemental, so this very high figure is of some significance. Next in rank is the British identity and most are proud to be British, especially in the younger age groups.

One of respondents stated that "*the most important issue is being a Muslim. I am proud of what I am and also Sylheti is my mother tongue of which I am also proud*". Most of the respondents speak Sylheti (Figure 5.8), especially at home and among their relatives and friends from same identity. Their standard Bengali is generally poor and some prefer to use English when speaking to non-Sylheti Bangladeshis. Those women unable to speak English live behind a major psychological and practical barrier.



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.8 Languages of Respondents.

Figure 5.8 was constructed from my survey and shows that a majority of the respondents speak Sylheti most of the time. Respondents from Newcastle, followed by Darlington and Durham were the most Sylheti-orientated. All of the respondents from Teesside and more then one third from Darlington, Durham and Sunderland use Sylheti at least half of their speaking time. A higher proportion of non-Sylheti use shows greater integration with people from other identities. Also it can be taken as a measure of their time spent outside the home and on non-domestic involvement.

5.9 Migration

The 1970s witnessed a significant expansion in the population of Bangladeshis in North East England. The migration history of the Bangladeshi ethnic minority is described in Chapter 3. The pioneers were joined by male migrants in the 1970s and early 1980s, and then by their wives and dependents as a process of family chain migration. The transition was sometimes painful. One lady recalled that:

"I felt very lonely. We were among the first families who came to live in the North East. Our people (Syhelti Bangladeshi) were living scattered and far from each other in this region. I couldn't understand what anyone was saying, nor I could I express my feelings to those around me."

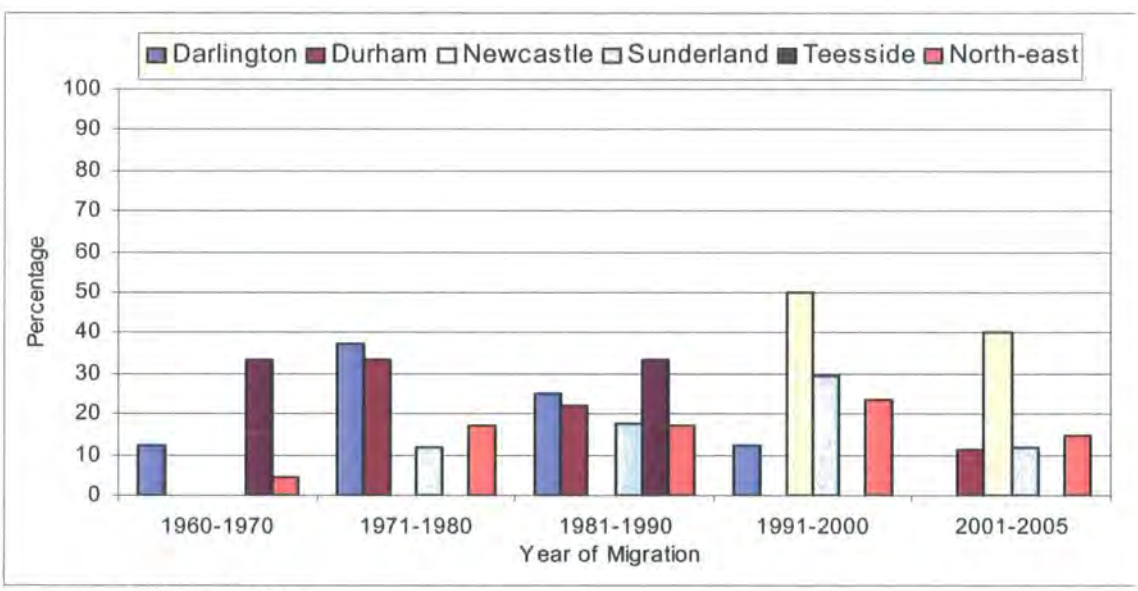
In the space of 30 to 35 years the population of Bangladeshi-origin Sylheti residents in North East England has grown dramatically and, according to the 2001 Census, has now reached 16,000. The growth of the Bangladeshi community in different part of Britain has been examined and discussed by Adams (1987), Choudhury (1993), and Phillipson et al. (2003). According to Eade (1999), the experiences of the first generation were patchy, and this was especially true of the women who started to arrive in increasing numbers from villages in Sylhet (Adams 1987; Choudhury 1993; Eade 1999; Phillipson, et al. 2003)

Phillipson et al. (2003) commented on Gavron's (1997) study of young Bangladeshi women in Bethnal Green, London. She has identifies a number of reasons for the growing numbers of Bangladeshi women entering the UK. One of the vital reasons she identified was the political and social fall-out, including destitution and landlessness, from the war of liberation with Pakistan in 1971 (Gavron 1997). The 1971 Immigration

Act helped and continued to allow the entry of dependents of men already in Britain, but with an age limit of 18 or under in the case of children. The following sections will discuss and share some experiences of respondents regarding their migration experiences.

5.10 Year of Migration

As stated earlier, among my respondents, the first migration of women took place to the North East region in the 1960s. The Darlington and Teesside areas were first, with no-one having migrated to Durham, Newcastle or Sunderland, 1960-70 (Figure 5.9). Darlington and Durham had most arrivals between 1971 and 1980, but few migrants came to Sunderland in these times and there was no migration to Newcastle or Teesside. Overall, migration by the respondents in the 1980s was, at eight, the same as for the 1970s.



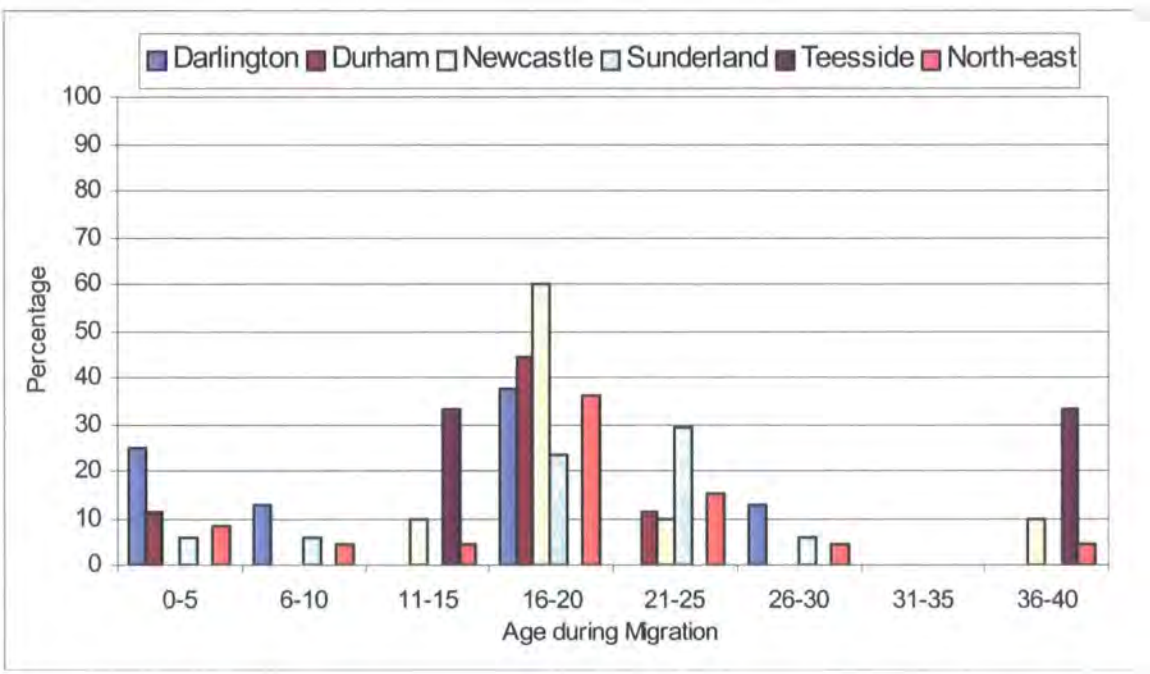
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.9 Year of Migrations of Respondents.

Migration to Newcastle was a feature of the 1990s and this has remained the most popular destination since then, along with Sunderland, but Darlington, Durham and Teesside have had few recent arrivals.

5.11 Age During Migration

Most of the respondent migrated when they were between 16 and 20 years of age, followed by 21-25 years (Figure 5.10). These are the two main age groups when women are married in this community and the majority migrated for the purpose of marriage. A small number came as dependent children. Those who migrated in their middle age (36-40) came through the family chain migration process.



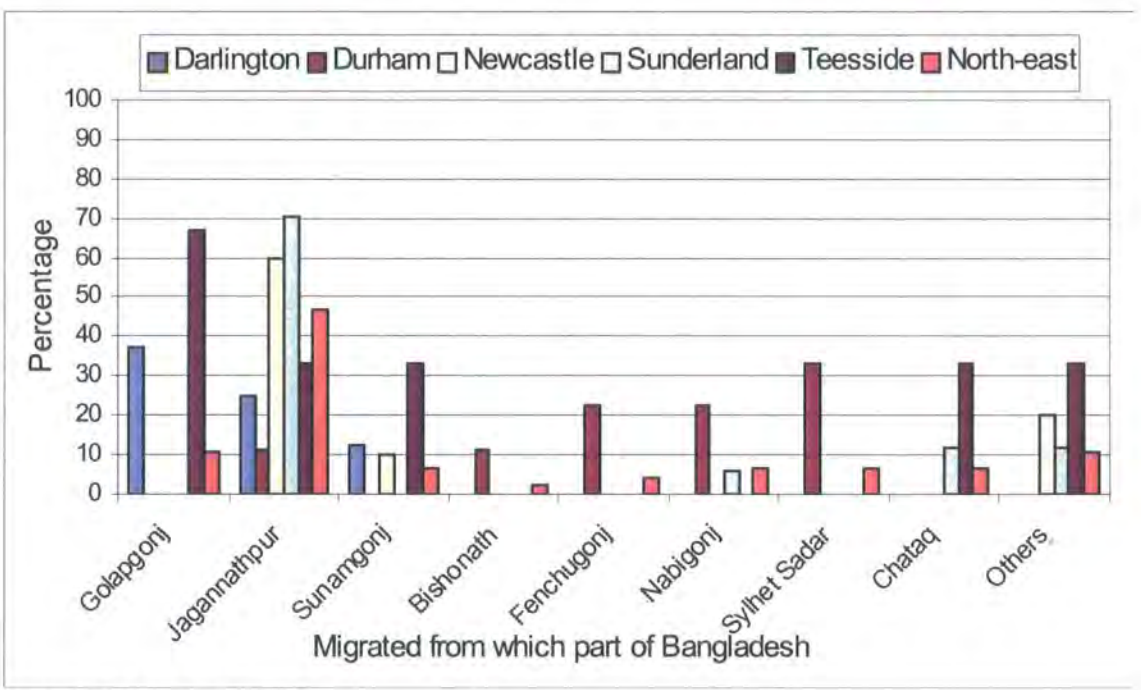
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.10 Age of respondents on migration.

One of the respondents recalled her childhood just before migration with regret: *"Oh! I really miss all those delicious foods, especially Pitha (cakes) in the winter mornings. I remember one day all my friends and relatives started telling that we are going to London.... They said Oh! London is a very nice and rich place...We arrived London in a huge plane with our parents. It was very cold. We stayed with our relatives.... I started a new school here but missed my old school... I missed my friends in Sylhet. Here school and everything were nice... the only difficulty was the language...".*

5.12 Region of origin in Bangladesh

The research was deliberately conducted among women from the Sylheti community in the North East of England. They come from different parts of the ex-Greater Sylhet district, which is now a division/province. More than half come from Jagannathpur thana (Figure 5.11). Surprisingly, most of the respondents in Sunderland come from one village, Syedpur, in Jagannathpur thana, and are related to each other. I was told that: "*We are 330 families migrated from same Syedpur village of Jagannathpur thana of greater Sylhet District living here in Sunderland, which is the second Syedpur, as both places start with the letter 'S'.*"



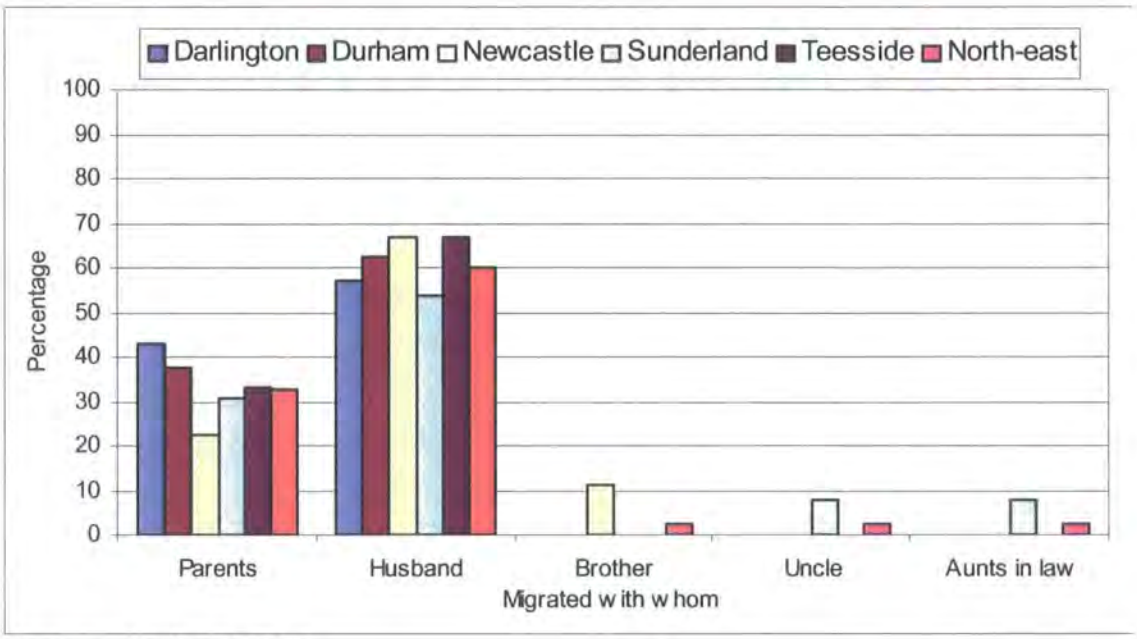
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.11 Age of respondents during migration.

The majority in Newcastle are also from Jagannathpur thana, followed by Sunamgonj sadar. Darlington and Teesside are dominated by the migrants from Golapgonj thana. Durham respondents are diversely from Sylhet sadar, Nabigonj, Fenchugonj and Jagannathpur.

5.13 Migrated with Whom

Most respondents migrated to Britain with their husbands (Figure 5.12), the highest proportion in this category being in Newcastle and Teesside followed by Durham and Darlington respectively. Almost two thirds of the respondents in Sunderland migrated with their husband and other third with parents.



Source: Author (2005).

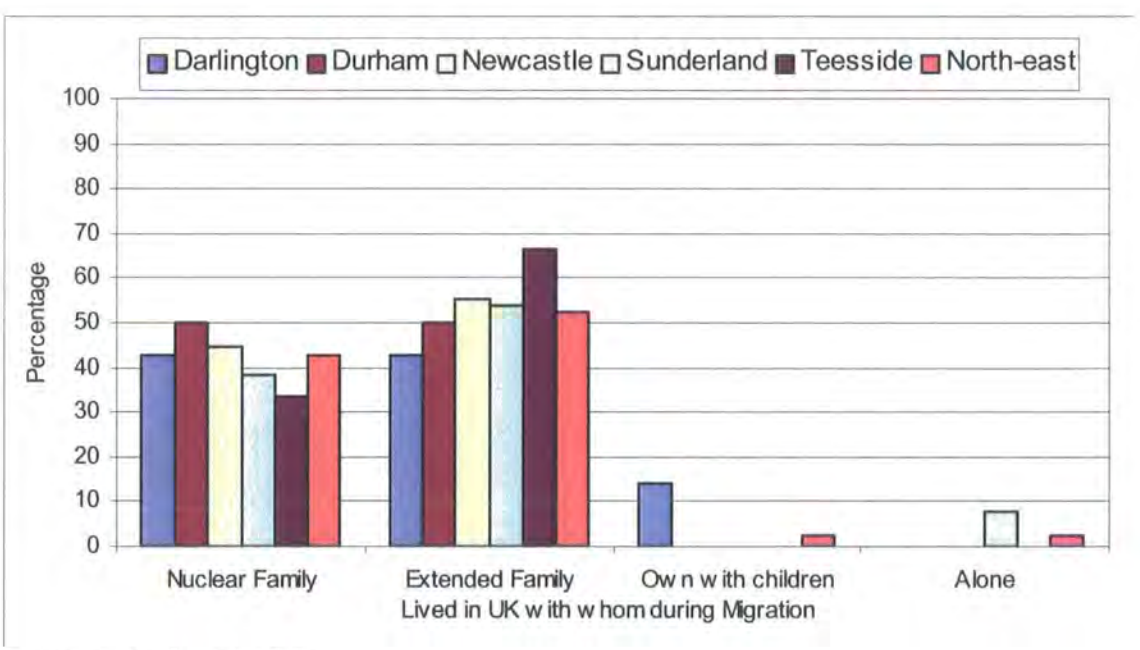
Figure 5.12 With whom respondents migrated.

The following quotation gives a flavour of the process involved:

"My parents arranged my marriage to a cousin who came from Britain to marry and then brought me here with him. I was studying at college and my parents were worried about me and were looking for a good groom. They were keen to get me married with a relative or acquaintance living in Britain as they knew that even for a good groom with a decent job in Bangladesh it is hard to look after a family. They also worried about the law and order situation in our country, with lots of violence and disturbances, including the throwing of acid in the face or on the body of young girls who refuse anyone for a relationship."

5.14 Lived with after Migration

Migration from Sylhet is a complex transitional process with several moves and changes of status. As stated earlier, marriage is one vital part. There is a varying time period after marriage ranging from a matter of weeks to a period of years or more of waiting before settlement in Britain. In this time span a lot of life changes occur, such as the arrival of a baby and visits back and forth from husbands. Then the day comes and there are usually a number of moves. Sometimes this involves temporary accommodation or temporary stays with friends and relatives. Most of the respondents lived in an extended family immediately after migration (Figure 5.13). The highest proportions of these were on Teesside, followed by Newcastle. Half of the respondents from Durham and Darlington lived initially in extended families and other the half in nuclear families.



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.13 Living immediately after migration.

According to one respondent:

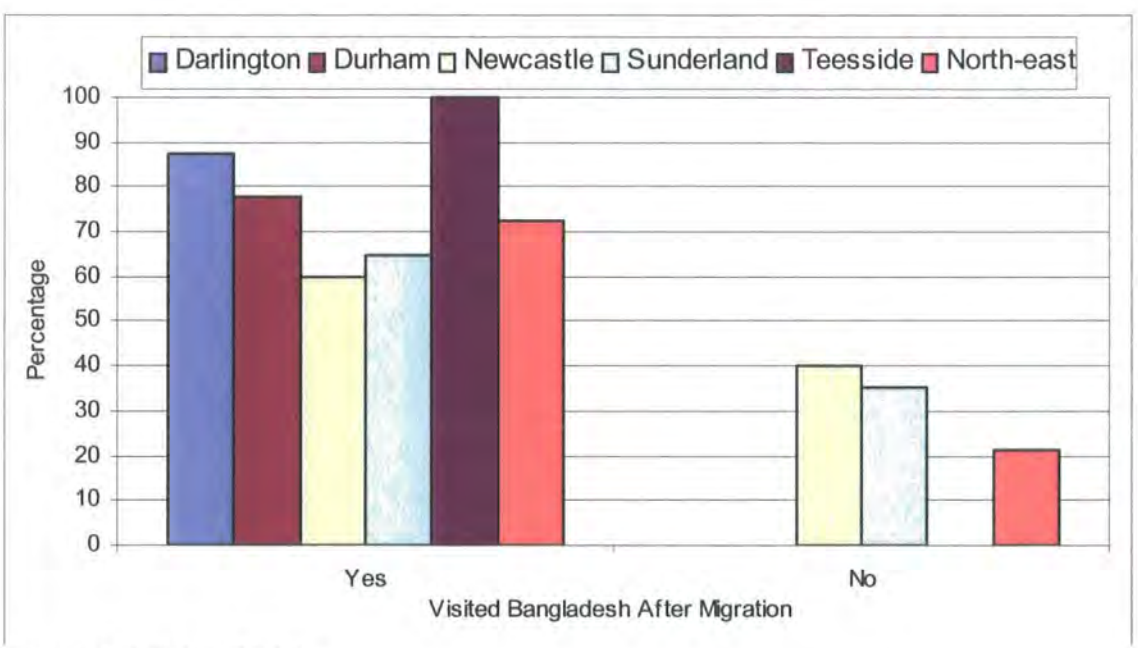
"*We first stayed in an extended family with my husband's relatives in their house. I met a lot of his friends and relatives in the first few weeks. They all were kind and helpful to us. I was happy to live around them since I was missing my parents and family back home. Then after several weeks we moved to a rented flat. It was a very big change for me. It took some time to get used to everything. Here you have to do everything on your own, don't you? Back home there were people to help and elderly members of family around me. In this country I am on my own. I have to cook, clean, look after children and do domestic work the whole day....*"

Most of them do not consider going back to Sylhet as a solution to the hard work and other problems here. This is because they realize the advantages of staying here, especially for their children's education and the family's better earnings. However, they always want to visit Sylhet and keep in touch with their friends and family back home.

5.15 Visiting Bangladesh after Migration

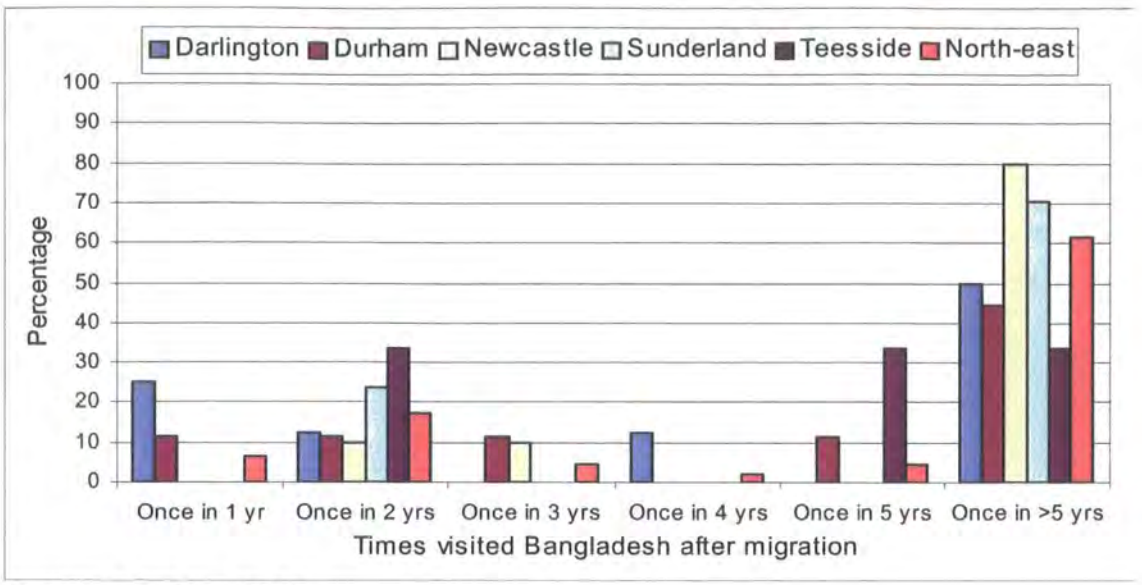
Most of the respondents said that they miss their friends and relatives back home and that they are always keen to visit Sylhet. Most (75 per cent) have visited Bangladesh at least once after migration (Figure 5.14). Usually it takes several years for the first visit until they are settled in Britain and earning a stable income. A cluster of respondents from Newcastle and Sunderland haven't visited Bangladesh yet because most of them have migrated very recently. One told me that she had only recently visited Bangladesh after a long interval:

"Oh! I was waiting for a long time to visit Bangladesh but the situation didn't arise until March '05 when we all (including our only son aged nearly two years) stayed in Syedpur village for four months. We had nice time. We met our relatives whom we haven't seen for a long while."



Source: Author (2005).

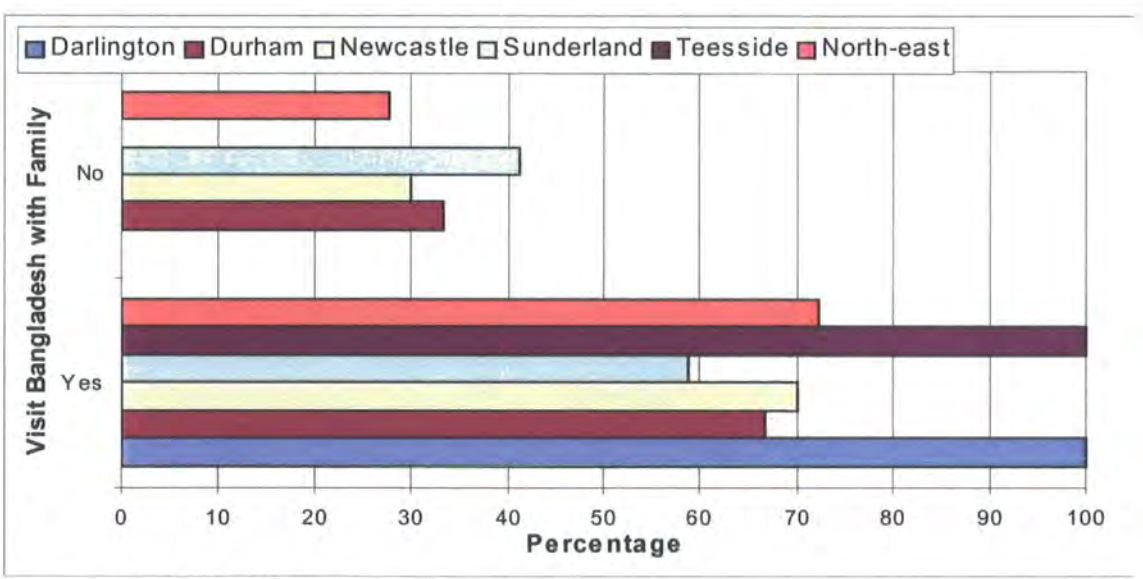
Figure 5.14 Respondents visit Bangladesh after migrated.



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.15 How often Respondents visit Bangladesh after migration.

Figure 5.15 shows that most of the respondents from the North East visit Sylhet roughly once every five years. This involves a heavy expenditure, especially for travel, and on return they are penniless. The majority of respondents visit Bangladesh accompanied by their family members. Everyone from Darlington and Teesside was accompanied by their family members during their last visit to Bangladesh (Figure 5.16).

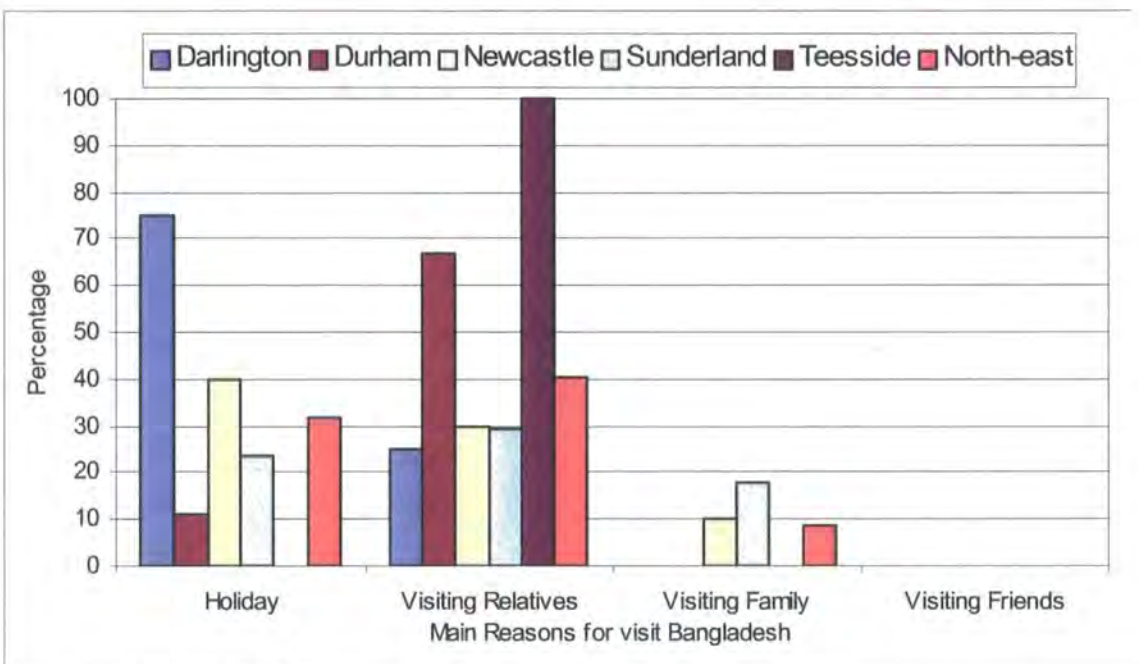


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.16 Respondents visit Bangladesh with family after migration.

5.16 Reasons and Place of Visit in Bangladesh

The majority returned to Bangladesh to visit relatives, most of whom live in remote villages in Sylhet (Figure 5.17). Others made a family holiday which also gave them the opportunity to meet and greet friends and relatives. Most of respondents want to make their children familiar with village culture and heritage.



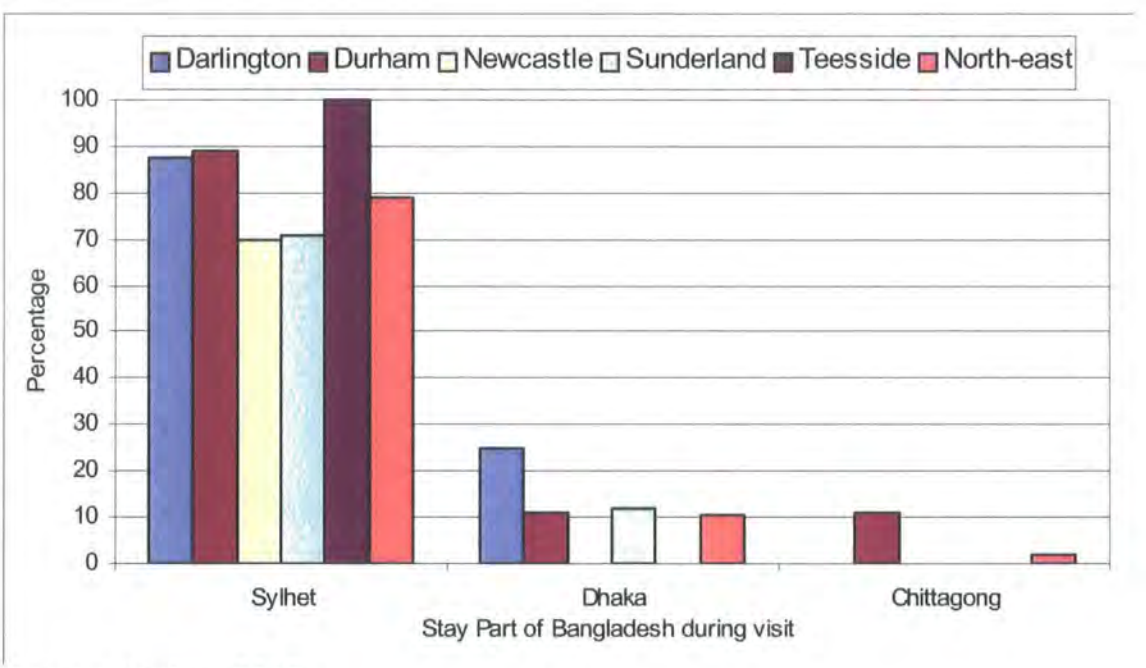
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.17 Reasons Respondents visit Bangladesh after migration.

One respondent expressed her hopes behind a long waiting visit to Bangladesh:

"*I always wish I can visit my village and indulge myself with my relatives and friends. I don't know what their feelings are but I am sure they will be happy too...In the meantime several years have passed and we have been blessed with a baby boy and he is now the age when I want to show him places, the culture and heritage where we were born and brought up...*"

Due to earnings from foreign currency and huge flow of traffic, the airport in Sylhet has been converted to international status and named after a leader of the liberation war as General Osmani International Airport. Now there are direct flights to Sylhet from different parts of the world. Most of the respondents go directly to Sylhet and then hire a microbus to visit their village (Figure 5.18). That is the reason that Sylhet has been named the city of microbuses and a large amount of capital has been invested in this business. The visitors are known as "LONDONI" and lots of families depend on them and wait for them to visit or to send money from Britain. A visit is a holiday for the visitors but a festival for their hosts. Most visits last for a couple of months and end in sorrow when they leave and start struggling for next one.

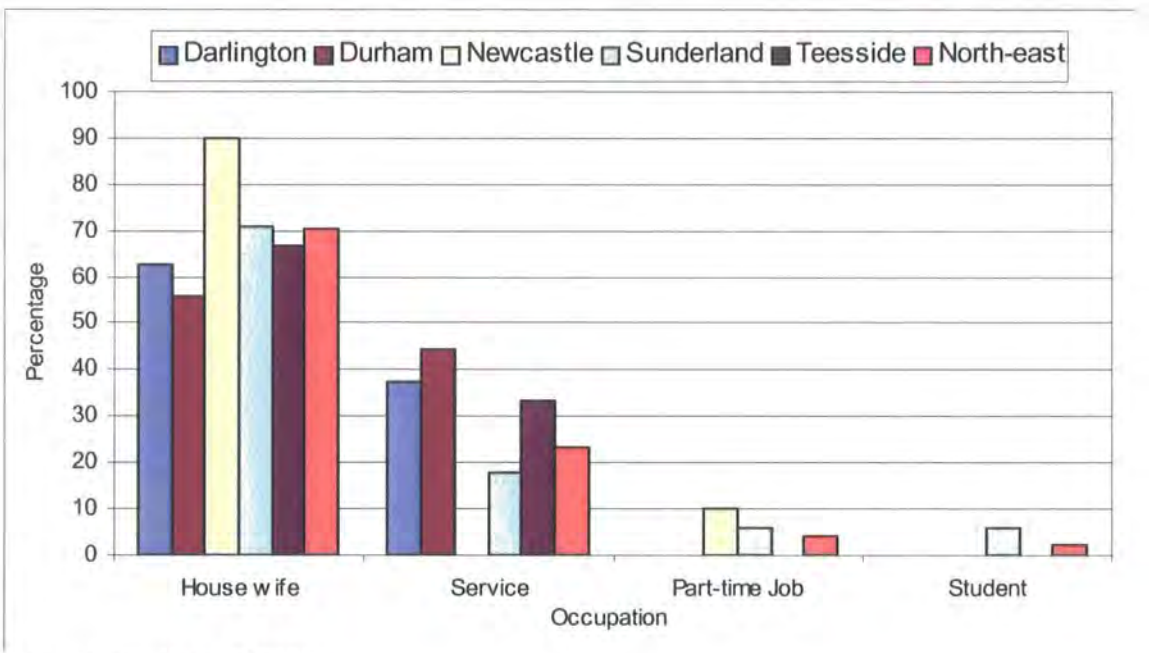


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.18 Places Respondents visit in Bangladesh after migration.

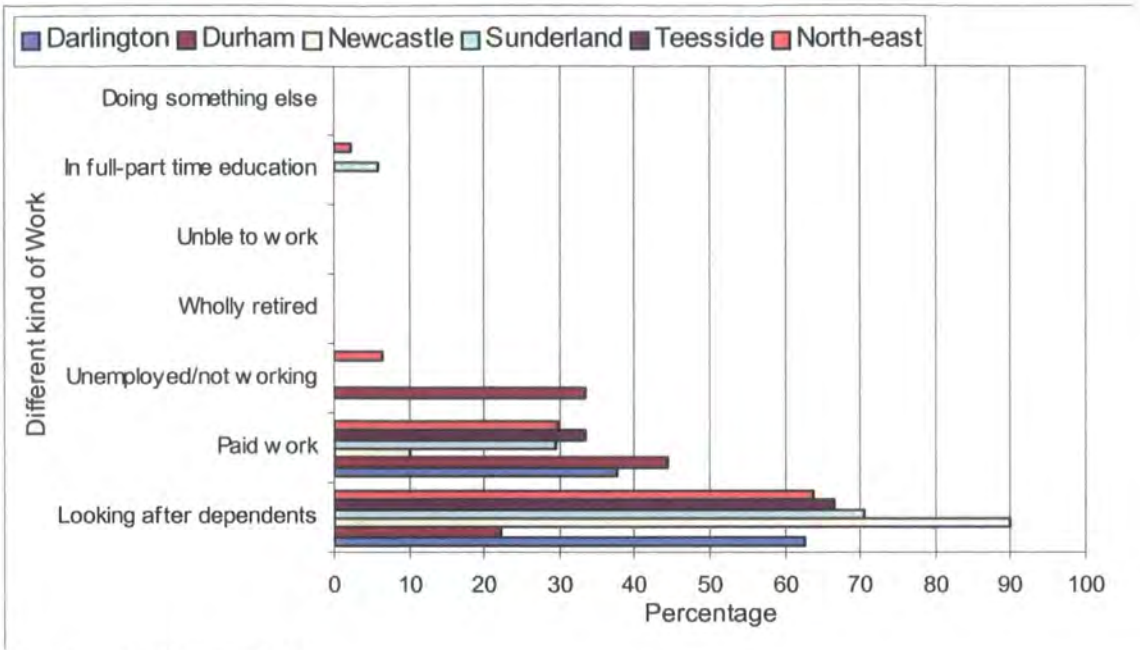
5.17 Economic Activities

Women from Bangladeshi community mostly are not directly involved in work out side the home. Most of the respondents are housewives (Figure 5.19). The highest proportion of housewives is found in Newcastle followed by Sunderland. In a sense they are indirectly involved in economic activities by looking after children and doing all sorts of domestic activities which save time and resources that would otherwise have to be expended if such services were to be bought in. In Durham, however, almost half of respondents work at least part-time.



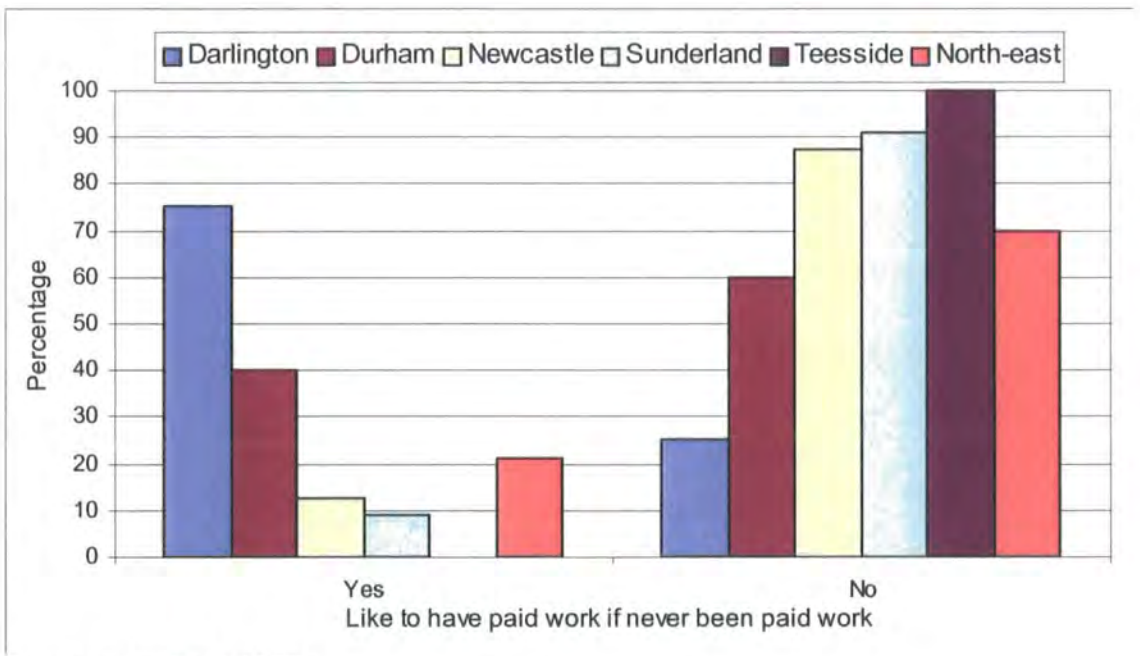
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.19 Occupations of Respondents.



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.20 Respondents involved in different types of Economic Activities.



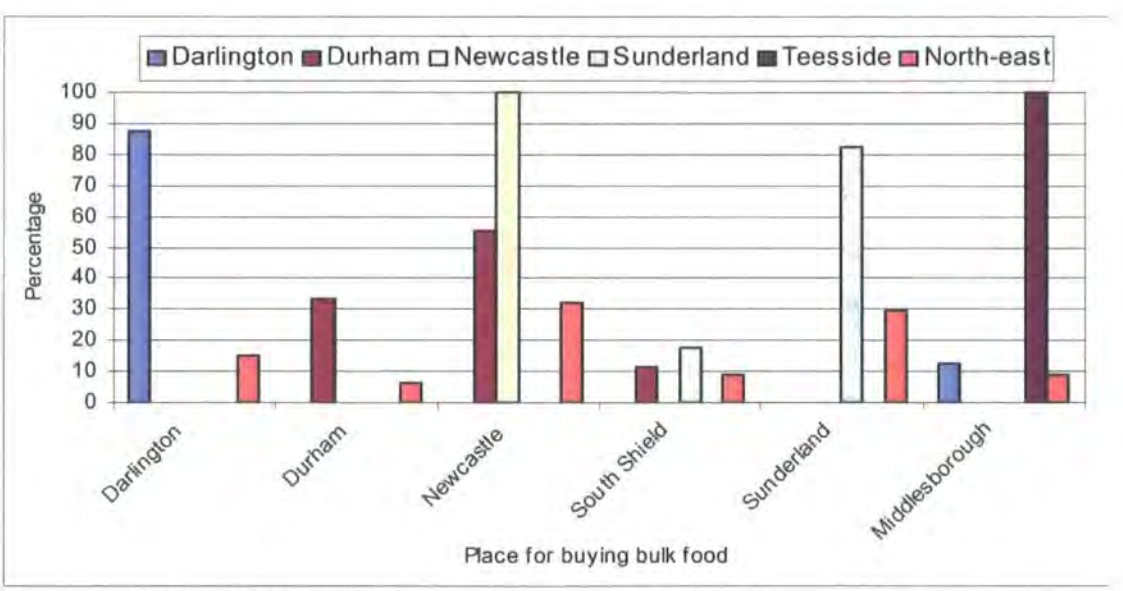
Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.21 Respondents involved in different types of Economic Activities.

5.18 Movements

5.18.1 Buying Bulk Foods

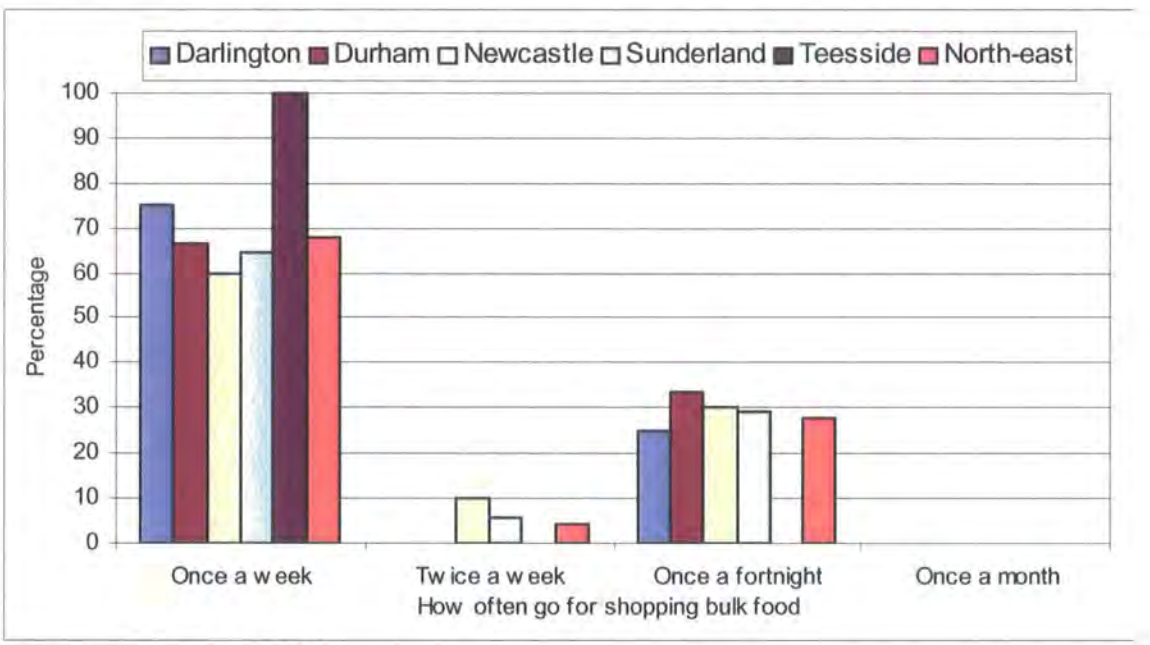
The daily consumption of a variety cooked foods in the Bangladeshi community involves different spices and raw materials. Buying these in quantity requires visits to specialized Asian halal butchers and grocery shops. Bulk food consists of 45 or 20 kg sacks of quality rice, such as Basmati or American long grain; lentils such as Masur, Mug and Chana; sacks of onions, boxes of garlic cloves; halal (religiously slaughtered) meat, mainly beef, lamb, sheep, chicken and duck; various species of fish specially imported from Bangladesh, including Hilsa, Ruhi, Boal, Koi, Pabda, Chingri, Mola, Dhela and Kachli; certain vegetables are also imported from Bangladesh, particularly Lau, Kumra, and Kachur Lati. Other bulk foods are easily purchased from English Supermarkets. Nowadays a lot of Asian vegetables and fruits are available in supermarkets. Almost every one of my respondents buys their bulk foods in their own locality (Figure 5.22). Only the Durham families go further afield, to Newcastle, as there is no local halal butcher or Asian grocery shop. A few respondents from Sunderland go to South Shields for their bulk foods.



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.22 Places for buying bulk foods.

The frequency of visiting Asian halal meat and grocery shops or English supermarkets depends on circumstances such as the size and consumption of the family, the distance from shops and the availability of transport and spare time. Usually, respondents buy bulk foods once a week (Figure 5.23). Some, with small families and living at a distance, buy once a fortnight. A few, mainly from Sunderland and Newcastle, buy twice a week due to larger families or a shortage of storage space in the home. Some also mentioned the issue of the freshness of vegetables, fish and meat.



Source: Author (2005).

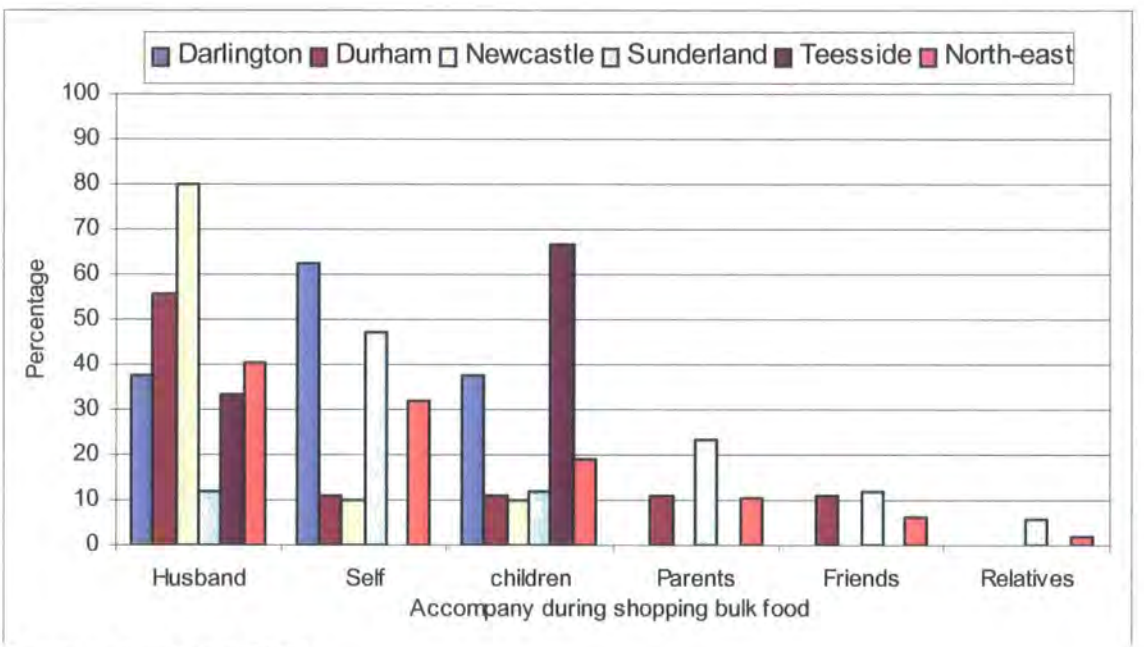
Figure 5.23 Frequency of purchase of bulk foods.

One of the respondents expressed her feelings about buying bulk foods:

"I like to go Asian halal meat and grocery shop for buying bulk foods because halal meats are available there. Also I can buy different spices which I have to use for cooking different dishes. Fresh Bangladeshi Lau and lati are also available. I also buy Pan-Supari and Bangladeshi fishes. My family members are very fond of different types of cooked food. I have to spend a long time in the kitchen cooking for them...."

Another commented:

"I wish I could go every time for bulk food, as I am the cook and I know what to bring and what not and in what amount. But unfortunately it's not possible every time. Sometimes I am busy with domestic work and He (husband) has to do the bulk shop. At least here we can go for shopping and sometimes it is only me, but women usually do not go to the bazaar on their own back in Sylhet."



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.24 Who accompanies during bulk food purchase.

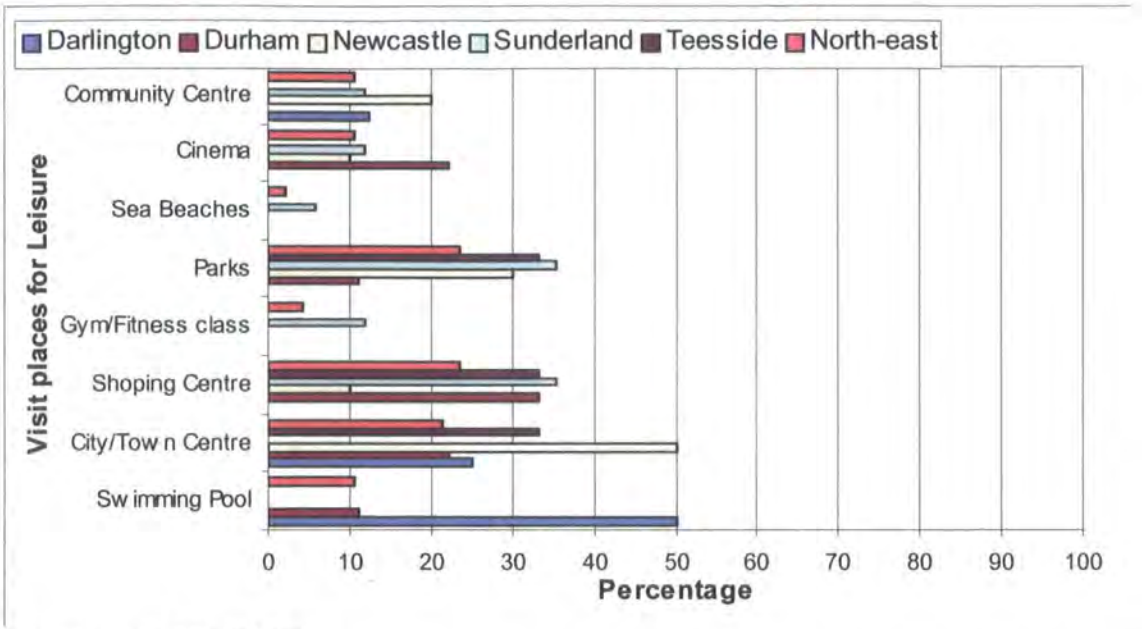
Most of the women from Newcastle and Durham go bulk food shopping with their husbands (Figure 5.24). This is mainly due to distance and the need for help with transportation. Most respondents from Darlington and Sunderland go by themselves because the Asian halal butchers and grocery shops are adjacent to their homes. For some reason respondents from Teesside and Darlington are often accompanied by their children, and those from Sunderland and Durham may also go with their parents, relatives and friends (Figure 5.24).

5.18.2 Visit for leisure

Bangladeshi women in North East have little time for leisure. Most visit shopping malls and town centres (Figure 5.25). This gives them two forms of entertainment. They can window shop before buying and perhaps have a meal in a restaurant. Most of them also visit parks with their young children, although there are some difficulties and negative aspects of visiting parks. Parks are not seen as safe due to antisocial behaviour like throwing stones, fierce dogs, unwanted comments and fear of physical assault. I visited one park in Sunderland out of curiosity as several respondents had said it is not safe and we had discussed the matter in a focus group meeting. We entered the park and were not bothering anyone but suddenly stones were thrown at us by some young teenagers and they shouted 'Paki, Paki', and we had to leave the park quickly.

A few respondents go to the cinema, and others spend time at community centres for activities such as sewing, computers, etc.. Respondents from Darlington used the swimming pool as their community leaders and workers had arranged private swimming sessions exclusively for women, and one told me that *"we are happy that our association has arranged a swimming session every month and it's exclusively for women. I think it's very good idea as leisure time for us."* A few from Sunderland visit a gym for fitness class and some of them go to the beach as it is very close to them.

When I tried to explore how often the women visit places for leisure, the majority replied without any hesitation that this happens only very occasionally (Figure 5.26). The reason was usually a heavy burden of domestic work and because they think that leisure is for children and young people.

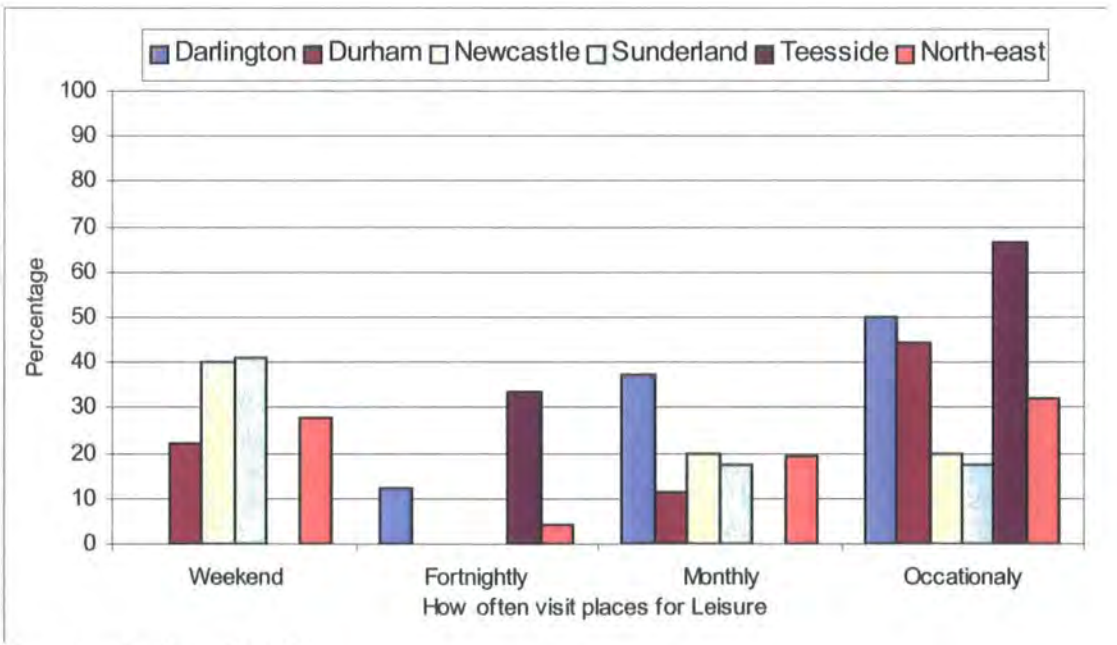


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.25 Visits different Leisure places.

According to one woman I spoke to:

"We get very little spare time after completion of the domestic work for leisure trips. During summer school holidays with the children we occasionally visit theme parks."

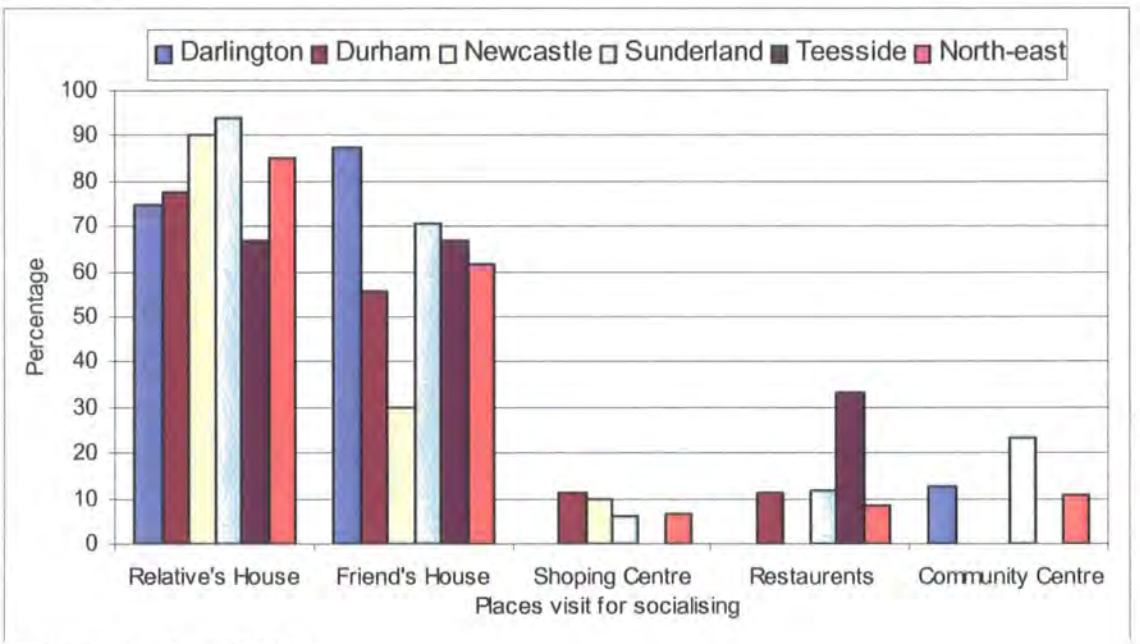


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.26 How often visits different Leisure places.

5.18.3 Visits for Socializing

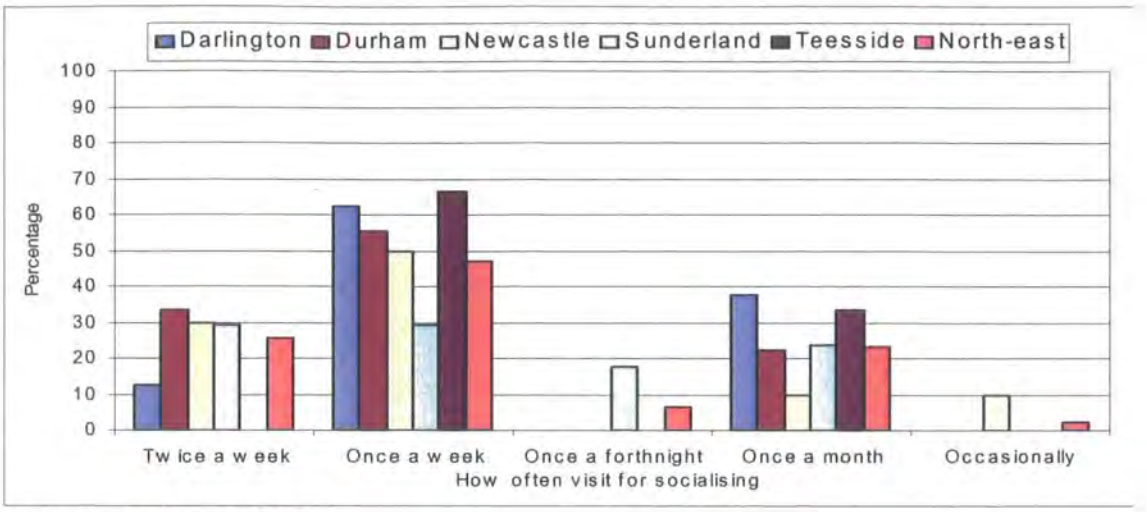
Socializing is part and parcel of the life of this community. Sometimes these visits are over long distances but usually it is within their own community. Socializing is thought of as being obligatory. Most of the respondents regularly visit their relatives' or friends' houses for socializing (Figure 5.27). Traditional foods are served during these visits and sometimes the occasions end up with gossiping and backbiting. There are opportunities to show off property and jewellery, and the good or bad achievements of children, spouses and others are discussed.



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.27 Visit different places for socializing.

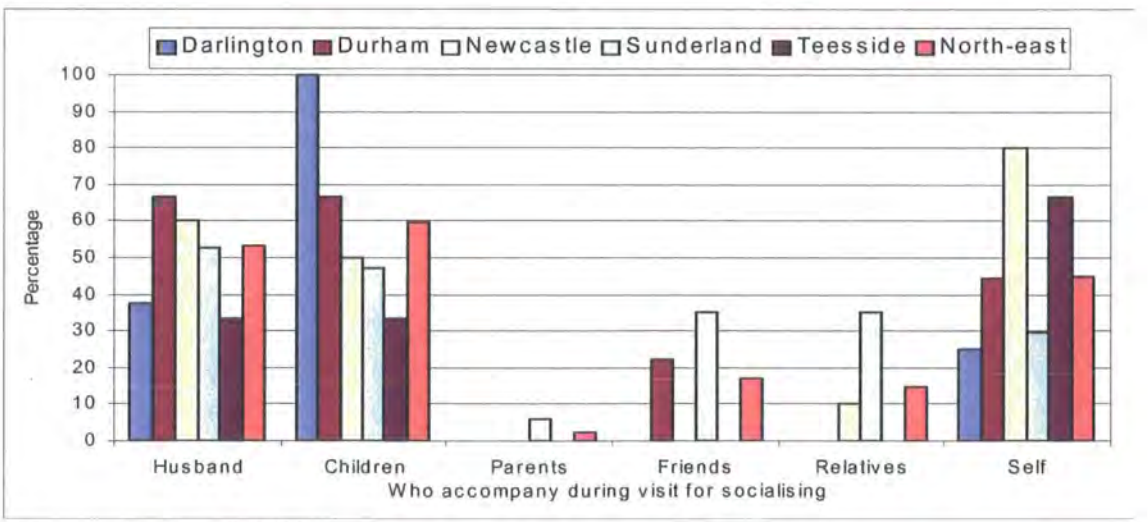
Most of the respondents make a social visit at least once a week (Figure 5.28). The majority from Teesside, followed in proportion by Darlington and Durham, go to different places once week for socializing. Excluding Teesside, some respondents also visit twice a week, as their friends and relatives live nearby. A significant number of respondents go for a social visit only once a month, often because the distances involved are great, and then for occasions such as weddings, birthdays, etc..



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.28 Frequency of visits to different places for socializing.

The majority of women make social visits accompanied by their husbands and children (Figure 5.29). This gives the children a chance to play with their cousins and make new friends. Usually the men and women stay separate on these occasions. Some respondents think that they can solve their problems by socializing. Some try to find a bride or groom for the marriage of their grown-up children. Information on different issues like purchasing the latest or cheaper clothes, cosmetics and other essentials are also shared and exchanged, as is information regarding jobs, business, schooling and courses offered by the Local Authority.

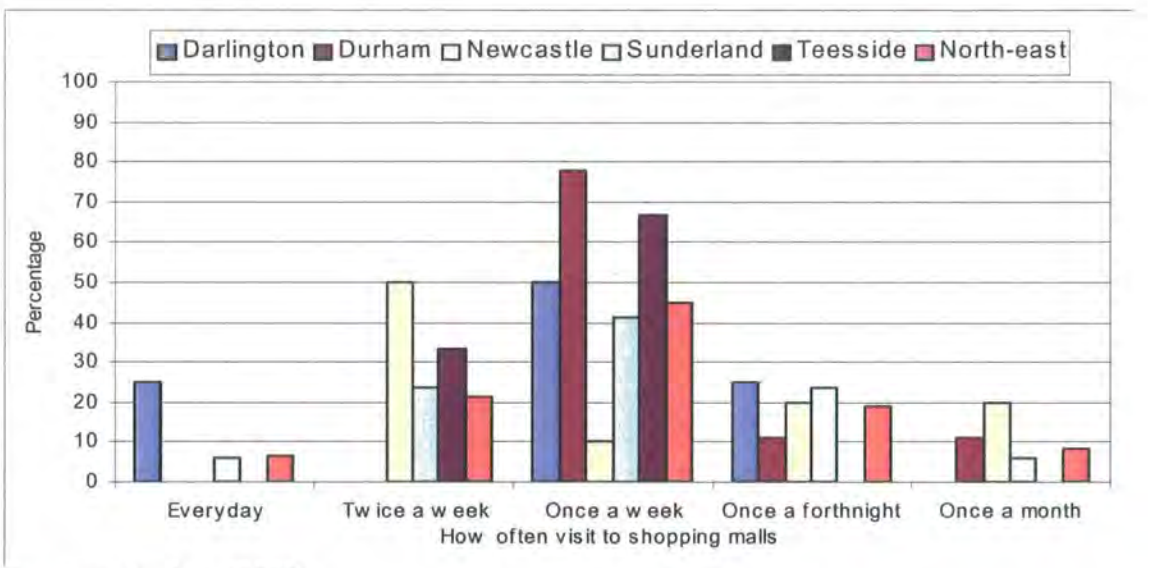


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.29 Those accompanying during visits for socializing.

5.18.4 Visiting Shopping Malls

As noted, information regarding new products of clothing, cosmetics, foods and household items is regularly updated within the social circle. This inspires the respondents to visit shopping malls in their own area and sometimes a big shopping mall like the Metro Centre, Eldon Square, Dalton Park, Bridges, Team Valley, Arnison Centre, etc.. Most respondents, apart from those from Newcastle, visit these shopping malls at least once a week (Figure 5.30). These visits are partly for shopping and also for browsing. Significant numbers of respondents from Newcastle visit shopping malls twice a week, which are on their doorstep and are served by convenient public transport links.

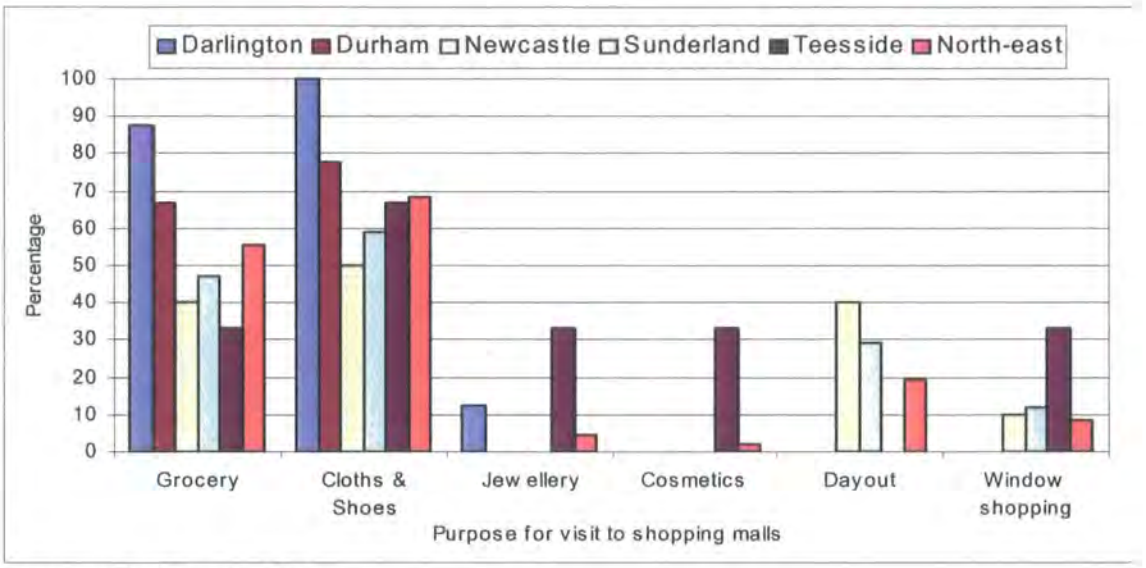


Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.30 Frequency of visits to shopping malls.

These shopping malls provide opportunities for buying almost everything because of the variety of stores. Most of the respondents mentioned more then one reason for visiting the malls. The majority mentioned buying clothes and shoes, followed by groceries (Figure 5.31). Children clothes and shoes are the most essential products. They don't always go for the latest fashion or renowned designers but look for price. One

obligation is to take or send a lot of clothing, shoes, toiletries and cosmetics to their friends and relatives who live in Bangladesh, so they tend to stock up at their convenience. They also look for the sales and special offers, as these give them greater opportunities to buy cheaper products.



Source: Author (2005).

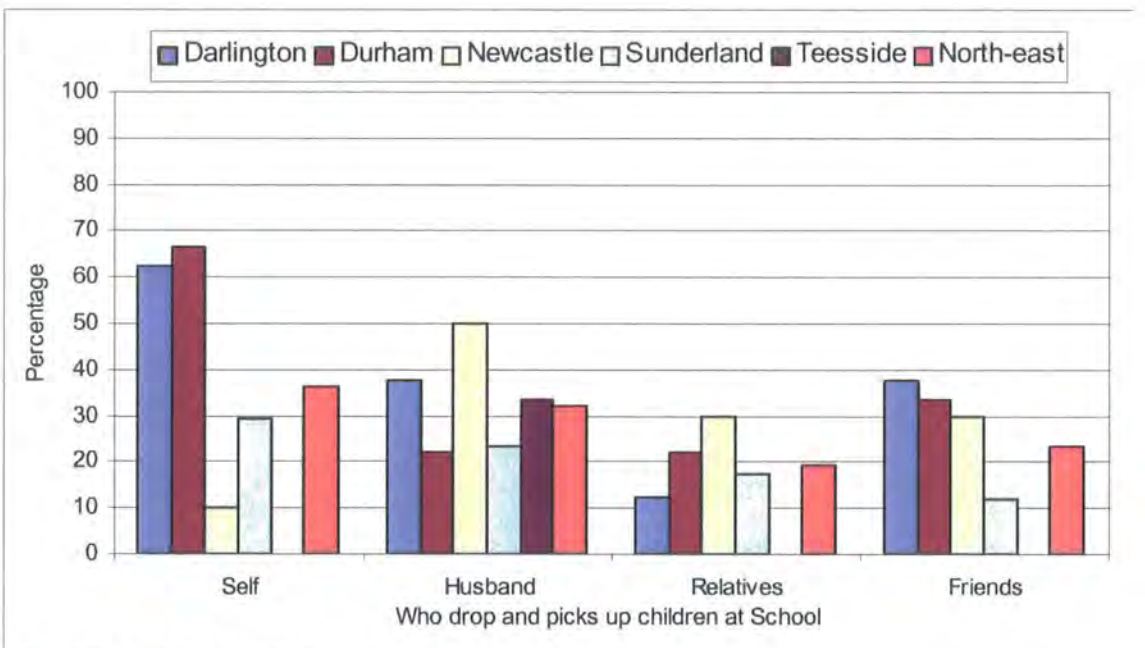
Figure 5.31 Reasons and purposes for visiting different shopping malls.

Grocery shopping covers all food items except for meat (beef, lamb, sheep and chicken), which is purchased from Asian halal shops. Usually, they go to a shopping mall which has a superstore such as Tesco, Asda, Morison and Sainsbury's. Milk and milk products like butter, margarine, cheese, yoghourt and ice cream are bought here. Other products include toiletries and domestic cleaning agents. Dry foods and savouries like chocolates, biscuits, cakes, sugar, tea, coffee and breakfast cereals are also purchased.

Usually the women travel to the shopping mall either by their own transport, or by public transport, accompanied by their spouse and children. Sometimes they visit shopping malls alone while their children are at school and their spouses are at home.

5.18.5 Movements Associated with Children's Schooling

We came to know earlier in the discussion about the different issues concerning the movements of Bangladeshi women in North East England. They have to go out and visit different places for different reasons and purposes. One of the vital and most important movements for women who have children is to drop them off and pick them up from school. Fathers are rarely involved in dropping off because they work until late and sleep until midday (Figure 5.32) but some pick up their children from school before they go for work at the Indian restaurant. So, distance from school to home plays a vital role when families choose a house. They always prefer to be close to their children's school.



Source: Author (2005).

Figure 5.32 Who drops and picks up children from school.

5.19 Fear, Anxiety and Wariness (FA&W)

Fear, anxiety and wariness are related to individuals' general feelings of insecurity and belonging in a broader context as well as their specific concerns about crime (Pain 1993; Smith 1989). Spatial analysis still remains central to these considerations, and social geographers have taken explicit account of individuals' relation to power and resources, linking patterns of inequality in space and society in an attempt to explain the variations in the extent and effects of fear and anxiety between different social groups (Pain 1993). It has been suggested that those who feel a lack of integration into their neighbourhoods, isolation, or a lack of social acceptance, those who have little control over resources, and those who are marginalized and experience a sense of powerlessness within society, are most likely to suffer fear, anxiety and wariness (Kail and Kleinman 1985; Pain 1993; Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Smith 1986; Smith 1989; Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988a). General feelings of uncontrollability may become focused on specific FA&W about social and community structure and traditions, antisocial behaviour, crime and other incidents which are prevailing in the society and community are consequently manifested in spatial perceptions and behaviour (Pain 1993).

FA&W can be conceptualized as an expression of the sense of powerlessness and uncertainty that accompanies our daily activities (Pain 1993; Smith 1989). Although gender differences are referred to in these discussions, the link between higher levels of FA&W among women and the general inequalities which women experience in public and private spaces have not been explicitly drawn. Yet there are clear parallels: Smith (1984, 1986, 1987b, 1989), for example, highlights the ways in which the 'structured inequality of British society', transected by race and class, influences the distribution of FA&W (Smith 1984a; Smith 1984b; Smith 1986; Smith 1987; Smith 1989).

The capacity of different groups to control space (and here space is embodied with symbolic as well as physical meaning) influences the outcome of FA&W. FA&W are seen in geographers' structural analyses as having a role in perpetuating inequality as well as indicating social and political vulnerability, as the response to FA&W of powerless groups may reproduce vulnerability (Pain 1993). As a simple example, if people of other colour stay indoors for fear of racist attack, then their white oppressors gain more control of public space. The unintended consequences of informal reactions to crime include the reproduction of patterns of dominance, subordination and resistance that are expressed in the national political economy (Pain 1993; Smith 1986). According to Pain (1993), there has been a move, superficially in the opposite direction, towards explanations at the level of the individual which take account of the ways in which people react to and are affected by different layers of power; this reflects a broader trend in social analysis to recognition of the broad social and spatial structures influencing FA&W. Smith (1989) has highlighted the need to look at the differences between and within households to understand fully how powerlessness affects individuals' relation to FA&W, while the various ways in which spatial structure affects individuals' perceptions have been explored in environmental psychology (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988b). This work has established that feelings of being unsafe are highly situated; variations in fear and anxiety are dependent on particular places and locations (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988a).

Pain (1993) analysed the fear of crime, which provides a fitting framework for consideration of the effect of gender. She explained that space has a particular salience to women's experiences of fear, though social geographers' interest in structural analysis, consideration of the role of space in women's vulnerability to crime and its

effects has only begun recently with the work of Valentine (Valentine 1989a; Valentine 1989b; Valentine 1991; Valentine 1992).

Early contributions by feminist geographers to the discipline were principally concerned with making women's lives and activities more visible. Later analysis involved challenging the origins of geographical knowledge, reflecting feminist challenges to social science elsewhere (Harding 1987). Areas of research have included the structure and design of the built environment and the spatial organisation of cities (Bowlby, et al. 1982; Boys 1984; Matrix 1984; Saegert 1980); women's limited access to resources and services (Tivers 1985); restrictions on mobility (Pickup 1988); relations with the state (Bondi and Peake 1988); the 'gendering' of space in urban areas, and the cultural and ideological association of appropriate behaviour for the sexes with certain places (Mazey and Lee 1983; McDowell 1983). An outline of the diversity of feminist geography work can be found in Bondi (1990b) and a comprehensive review in McDowell (1993). Resembling feminist analyses of the role of male violence, the general conclusion is that the division of urban space both reflects and influences the sexual divisons of labour, women's role in the family, and the separation of home life from work (Bondi 1990; McDowell 1983).

According to Pain (1993), feminist geography provides the third dimension of a framework for examining the effects of fear of violence on women. It provides valuable radical and structural interpretations of social and environmental phenomena, as well as spatial analysis. Taking a radical feminist approach, Valentine (1989b, 1991, 1992) has begun an exploration of the impact of women's fear on their geographies. Focusing on women's restricted use of public space, she concludes that fear constitutes a 'spatial expression of patriarchy'. My contribution to this area of inquiry is to follow up and

critically evaluate different FA&W of Bangladeshi women living in the North East of England.

Many explanations for women's FA&W have been put forward over the last decade. They can, perhaps, best be ordered into those seeking to explain each of a number of paradoxes, or problems in resolving women's fear with women's experience as victims, which have emerged from research. Pain (1993) identified the three key paradoxes with which my work seeks to engage, and the explanations which have been offered for them in order to locate the questions from which my own research arises.

5.19.1 Fear, Anxiety and Wariness in Public Places

Different fears, anxieties and worries in public places have been found among the respondents through a combined participatory approach and these are discussed below. Here public places mean outside the home in the various neighbourhoods, walking around streets, footpaths, tunnels, bridges, parks, sea beaches, riverside walks, shopping centres and malls, town and city centres, rail and bus stations and bus stops, public transport (rail and bus), banks, post offices and pay points, and street corners. Table 5.1 is the accumulation of those FA&W found through the participatory in-depth questionnaire survey associated with semi structured interviews. A high percentage of FA&W are comments about cultural dress, especially the hijab and head scarf, followed by other unwanted comments, teasing, swearing and shouting (Table 5.1). All the respondents from Newcastle, Sunderland and Teesside reported different unwanted comments regarding cultural dresses like the Borkha, Sari and Salwar Kameej, including hijab and head scarf (Figure 5.1). Some of the unwanted comments, teasing, swearing screaming and shouting are mentioned, such as 'Black', 'Paki', 'Terrorist', 'Ninja', 'Taliban', Bin Laden's 'Al Qaeda', 'go back to your country', etc..

Figure 5.33 Examples of Bengali cultural dress

Fear of physical assault in public places due to colour prejudice is one of the most frequent FA&W that prevails among the Bangladeshi women living in the North East. There are examples of being pushed and pulled from behind, and of holding, kicking, snatching hand bags, and pulling off the hijab or scarf. These types of FA&W are not only found among the women themselves but also their young daughters who are outside the home. These FA&Ws prevail all the time as these incidents cannot be discussed nor reported, as their society is very conservative and shy. In addition, there is fear of mugging and robbery, followed by perceived danger at vulnerable street corners occupied by drunks and groups of teenagers, and inadequate security measures (lack of adequate street lighting, CCTV, and general vigilance).

Table 5.1 Fear, anxiety and worries in public places.

Fear and anxiety in public places (per cent)	Darlington	Durham	Newcastle	Sunderland	Teesside	Northeast
Comments about cultural dress, hijab & scarf	75	89	100	100	100	94
Unwanted comments, teasing, swearing, shouting	88	100	80	94	100	91
Physical assault due to colour	75	78	90	88	100	85
Mugging and robbery	50	56	90	88	100	77
Vulnerable street corners (drunks & groups of teens)	50	22	80	88	100	68
Inadequate security measures (street lights, CCTV)	50	33	90	76	100	68
Language barrier	63	67	90	59	67	68
Colour prejudice, racial abuse	38	67	50	65	100	60
Car and bike speeding	25	33	70	12	367	53
Leering and whistling	25	22	70	71	33	51
Car theft and damage	25	33	70	65	33	51
Flashing	25	22	50	65	33	45
Children out without parents	63	22	40	53	33	45
Young daughter alone outside (sexual harassment)	63	56	20	18	33	34
Set on by fierce dog	13	11	30	65	0	34
Spitting, throwing litter and stones	0	0	60	65	0	36
School bullying	63	22	30	24	33	32
Prejudice in society and community	13	11	30	35	0	23
Pulling off hijab and scarf	0	0	20	6	0	6

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

One strong FA&W is the language barrier. Most of the respondents cannot speak English fluently nor do they understand the local Geordie dialect and colloquial terms clearly. This FA&W is general, especially in Newcastle (Table 5.1). There are problems of communication with others especially in services like shopping mall, stations, and on public transport. This reduces their confidence in going outside alone. Sometimes they worry that they might be expressing, explaining or understanding wrongly, which might result in an adverse situation now or in the future.

Several reported a problem of people speeding past quickly with a car or bike in order to frighten them. Leering and whistling and flashing was mentioned by a majority of respondents living in Newcastle and Sunderland. Other incidents include being spat at in the street, people throwing litter and stones, being set on by a fierce dog and owners encouraging their dogs to urinate or defecate in their vicinity (see table 5.1).

5.19.2 Fear, Anxiety and Wariness in Private Places

There are also various dimensions of fears, anxieties and worries in private places. Superstitions were most frequently mentioned (Table 5.2). All of the respondents from Newcastle, Sunderland and Teesside mentioned this as a major concern (see next section). Back biting and gossip is painful and seems to be very common, to the extent that it is a barrier to socializing because it starts just after the exchange of greetings!

Table 5.2 Fear, anxiety and worries in Private Places.

Fear and anxiety in private places(per cent)	Darlington	Durham	Newcastle	Sunderland	Teesside	Northeast
Superstitions	75	78	90	100	100	89
Back biting and gossip	88	89	90	82	100	87
Conflict with parents, elderly and parents-in-law	75	78	90	76	100	81
Lots of domestic work(especially in extended family)	88	56	100	76	100	81
Pre and postnatal worries and depression	75	67	80	82	67	77
Theft of personal belongings	63	22	100	94	100	77
Burglary	63	22	100	94	100	77
Depressed staying home alone	63	56	90	76	67	72
Mental assault, low women's status	50	33	90	88	100	72
Loneliness (husband works until late at night)	75	33	90	71	67	68
Health (including children in family)	88	44	90	59	67	68
Screaming, shouting and unwanted comments	25	0	70	94	100	60
Sending money to relatives in Bangladesh	75	33	50	65	100	60
Breaking windows	38	0	90	24	67	38
Domestic violence	25	11	40	35	67	32
Physical and sexual assault by acquaintance	25	11	30	35	67	30
Worries about young and unmarried daughter	50	56	10	18	0	28
Door knocking by strangers and drunks	0	0	70	24	33	26
Door kicking and spitting	0	0	80	0	0	17
Conflict with ex-husband about children	13	0	10	18	0	11

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

One of the prominent FA&Ws among the respondents who live in a joint or extended family is conflict with parents, elderly relatives and parents-in-law (Table 5.2). Even those in nuclear families who live close to their relatives have this FA&W. This is usually because of the breaking of a convention that is not taken well by conservative older people.

Most of the respondents hate the domestic work that is expected of them when they live in an extended family. In particular, there is no help from male members of the family. One respondent explained this:

"I have to wake up early in the morning though my husband comes home very late night from his job. At first I have to prepare breakfast for all the members of my family as we live in an extended family. Then the children need to be ready for school and I need to prepare them including their packed lunch and finally I need to drop them off for school. By noon, I have to tidy up the bedrooms and other parts of the house, cook food for all my family members and do the washing and cleaning. I need to pick up the children and by then I am tired. I have to feed the children and my husband. Finally, I need to cook and serve dinner for all of my family and wash the dishes and clean up before going to bed."

Pre- and post-natal depressions are common among the married respondents. Pre-natal depression is mostly seen in the case of the first baby and in twin and triplet pregnancies. Respondents think that pre- and post-natal depression is a key FA&W, along with include different bad feelings, fear of new physical situations and wariness of looking after children. Also, a lot of respondents have mentioned that this FA&W also includes fear of a disabled baby being born, and of a baby with dark colouring, etc.. Postnatal depression is mainly about looking after babies and not doing normal work for sometime. The stress can mean lack of sleep.

Theft of personal belongings and burglary are also examples of FA&W. Bag snatching and mugging especially cause long-term upset. It makes women feel as if they might be mugged again or that someone is following. Burglary is especially traumatic because they think once it happens then you have to start again from the beginning.

Depression about staying home alone was mentioned, followed in order of importance by loneliness due to husbands coming home late from their catering jobs. The women get very few chances to go out of the home because of their domestic work. This results in staying home alone as other members of family are busy with their day to day life/job. Sometimes it can be scary staying at home alone, especially on weekend evenings.

Poor status in society and community are on the list of FA&W. The women think that they participate little in the decision-making of the family, as well as society more generally, and a major issue is male-domination, even on the Community Centre committee. The men also have more access to information and are more integrated with society generally through their profession.

A lot of respondents think that domestic violence has taken away the peace in their family life. It reduces their respect among family members and causes great disturbance for children. A few also mentioned physical and sexual assault by an acquaintance. This may explain the FA&W of staying alone at home late at night. Some respondents who are divorced and married a second time face conflict with their ex-husband regarding young children and property.

Door knocking by strangers and drunks, followed by door kicking and spitting are also voiced as FA&W. This is a problem mainly at night time and at the weekend. The early winter dark plays on their mind when they are alone.

Another vital issue for respondents is the position of their young, unmarried daughters. The community is very conservative and the members are always conscious about their reputations, especially the reputations to their young unmarried daughters, even prejudicially. A bad reputation or scandal can ruin future marriage prospects and cause a headache for the parents. Many women seem to be frightened of doing new, progressive things as this might not be accepted by the society and community, especially by the elderly. Following all the norms and traditions is also linked with keeping a good reputation in society and the community. And these good reputations are expected by the husbands, elderly relatives and in-laws.

Table 5.3 Feelings and community attitude (per cent).

Feelings and community attitudes(per cent)	Darlington	Durham	Newcastle	Sunderland	Teesside	Northeast
Always follow traditions	88	89	100	88	100	91
Need to keep good reputation in society	100	78	90	76	100	85
Make happy & satisfy all (husband, elderly & in-laws)	75	89	90	71	67	79
Always work at home	75	56	90	65	100	72
Not respected while without child after marriage	88	67	80	59	67	70
Seen as a baby-making machine	75	67	70	59	67	66
Looking after children and other family members	75	56	90	59	67	68
Cook for all	63	56	90	59	67	66
Pre and postnatal	63	56	70	53	67	60
Can't go outside at evening after bath & open hair	50	33	50	47	33	45
No outside job	38	44	50	35	67	43
Can't carry on higher studies	38	44	50	35	33	40

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

One woman told me that:

"My parents always expect that I should have good reputation in society and the community as they think that it's vital for my future. They always tell me to be tolerant even when I am in the right in arguments. They also keep telling me to maintain all the traditions and feelings prevailing in the Bangladeshi society and community. They will definitely be upset if they hear something from someone in the community even if I haven't done anything wrong. Any rumour or scandal will ruin our relations and I would be punished."

One of the feelings and attitudes of the society and community includes women having to work all the time at home. Some of the respondents said that they are happy working at home taking care of and cooking for children and other family members, but not all of the time by themselves. Some also complained that they cannot get a job outside or even have a chance to achieve qualifications for outside jobs.

Other respondents reflected on their feelings and community attitudes about married life without a child and women being seen as baby-making machines. Sometimes women who haven't given birth after few years of marriage are seen as OPOYA, that is a symbol of unluckiness. Sometimes they are not invited to or expected to come to ceremonies like marriages or to visit newly born babies at home, and people do not want to see such a person before the start of a journey or the start of any work with blessings.

5.19.3 Crimes Feared Most

In the past, 'fear of crime' has too often been treated as an unproblematic term, and there has been little conceptual analysis of it (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988b). While increasingly popular with the media, the phrase 'fear of crime', dating from the 1970s when research began, has been the subject of some questioning within academic circles (Pain 1993). Some have pointed out that there exists a range of reactions to crime, of which fear is only one. Many people do not report 'fear' as a response to crime in surveys so much as other feelings like 'anger' or 'shock' (Kinsey and Anderson 1992; Pain 1993), which seemingly leads to the conclusion that fear of crime is not such a problem in general after all. Rather than fear, the most common reaction to victimisation is anger and irritation at the inconvenience it causes. For certain sections of the population crime presents substantial problems and has significant implications for the quality of their lives (Kinsey and Anderson 1992; Pain 1993).

Definitions of 'fear' may vary widely, or that male respondents may be rather less likely than women to select a label which challenges an image of male invulnerability (Crawford, et al. 1990; Pain 1993). Here, in common with other feminist analysts of fear of crime, 'fear' needs to be broadly interpreted in order adequately to describe women's reactions to crime. 'Fear' has never been a very appropriate word. 'Fear' tends to conjure up an immediate and short lived dread which someone might feel, for example, when followed by a shadowy figure along a dark street, or when directly threatened with violence from an acquaintance (Pain 1993). On this basis fear is indeed a relatively rare feeling. However, in recent reconceptualizations of fear of crime have stressed that fear, and risk itself, is not necessarily fixed in space, time or context but often can be more usefully defined as an ongoing, lower key worries and anxiety.

The questionnaires used in my research which ask about the FA&Ws affecting women are backed up with subjective and evaluative information from semi structured interviews and focus group meetings. Table 5.4 illustrates that car theft is the crime which creates most fear, anxiety and worries among the Bangladeshi women living in North East England. The highest percentage of respondents from Newcastle (80 per cent) followed by Darlington (50 per cent) and Sunderland (47 per cent) think that car theft is the worst FA&W, whereas in Durham the figure was only 11 per cent.

Physical assault because of colour/religion is also a crucial crime in North East which create the second most serious (38 per cent) FA&W among the women respondents (Table 5.4). The highest percentages were from Teesside (67 per cent) followed by Newcastle (60 per cent) and Sunderland (47 per cent), but very few living in Durham and Darlington considered this to be a problem and these respondents actually said that people from different identities of colour and religion are living together very peacefully as cohabitants in these cities.

Table 5.4 Crimes feared most (per cent).

Darlington	Most	Fairly	Moderate	Less	Least
Car theft	50	25	0	0	25
House breaking	38	38	0	13	13
Physical assault because of colour/religion	13	25	13	25	25
Theft of personal belongings	13	50	13	25	0
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	13	50	13	13	13
Being mugged or robbed	0	50	0	38	13
Sexual assault	0	0	13	38	50
Durham	Most	Fairly	Moderate	Less	Least
Car theft	11	11	33	22	22
House breaking	0	0	33	44	22
Physical assault because of colour/religion	11	11	44	33	0
Theft of personal belongings	11	0	11	33	44
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	22	11	22	22	22
Being mugged or robbed	11	11	11	33	33
Sexual assault	0	33	11	0	56
Newcastle	Most	Fairly	Moderate	Less	Least
Car theft	80	20	0	0	0
House breaking	30	20	40	0	0
Physical assault because of colour/religion	60	20	20	0	0
Theft of personal belongings	10	40	30	20	0
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	70	20	10	0	0
Being mugged or robbed	0	40	60	0	0
Sexual assault	0	20	60	20	0
Sunderland	Most	Fairly	Moderate	Less	Least
Car theft	47	12	18	24	0
House breaking	24	24	29	24	0
Physical assault because of colour/religion	47	29	18	6	0
Theft of personal belongings	6	35	35	24	0
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	35	41	24	0	0
Being mugged or robbed	12	29	35	24	0
Sexual assault	6	18	41	24	12
Teesside	Most	Fairly	Moderate	Less	Least
Car Theft	33	33	33	0	0
House Breaking	100	0	0	0	0
Physical assault because of colour/religion	67	0	33	0	0
Theft of personal belongings	33	33	33	0	0
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	67	33	0	0	0
Being mugged or robbed	33	0	67	0	0
Sexual Assault	0	0	100	0	0
Northeast	Most	Fairly	Moderate	Less	Least
Car Theft	47	17	15	13	9
House Breaking	28	19	26	19	6
Physical assault because of colour/religion	38	21	23	13	4
Theft of personal belongings	11	32	26	23	9
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	38	32	17	6	6
Being mugged or robbed	9	30	32	21	9
Sexual Assault	2	17	38	19	23

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Second, 38 per cent of the women in the North East as a whole saw mental assault/cultural superstitions as a problem (Table 5.4). This was true especially in Newcastle (70 per cent) and Teesside (67 per cent), but less so in Sunderland (35 per cent), Durham (22 per cent) and Darlington (13 per cent).

The third worst FA&W was house-breaking - 38 per cent for the region (Table 5.4). All of the respondents (100 per cent) in Teesside were alerted to this, 38 per cent in Darlington, 30 per cent in Newcastle, 24 per cent in Sunderland, but none of the Durham ladies saw this as a threat because no such incident had occurred during their stay in the city.

Other crimes were of less significance. The regional averages were 11 per cent for theft of personal belongings, 9 per cent for mugging and robbery, and 2 per cent for sexual assault. None of the respondents from Darlington, Durham and Newcastle reported any examples of sexual assault, though a significant number of women think that the three crimes mentioned above create moderate FA&W (Table 5.4).

Table 5.5 shows the situation of crimes in the last five years. Most crimes are unchanged, although car theft has increased 34 per cent and respondents expressed concern about this increase (Table 5.5). The highest percentage (75 per cent) of women from Darlington reported that the car theft has increased in their area, followed by Newcastle (50 per cent), and Durham (33 per cent), but only 12 per cent from Sunderland and none from Teesside. None of the areas reported that car theft has decreased in the five year period.

Table 5.5 Crimes most common during last five years (per cent).

Darlington	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Car theft	75	0	25	0
House breaking	75	13	13	0
Physical assault because of colour/religion	50	0	38	13
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	13	13	63	13
Being mugged or robbed	38	13	38	13
Theft of personal belongings	25	13	38	25
Sexual assault	50	0	25	25
Durham	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Car theft	33	0	44	22
House breaking	11	11	44	33
Physical assault because of colour/religion	11	33	44	11
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	22	11	56	11
Being mugged or robbed	22	0	33	44
Theft of personal belongings	22	0	44	33
Sexual assault	22	0	33	44
Newcastle	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Car theft	50	0	50	0
House breaking	0	40	60	0
Physical assault because of colour/religion	0	40	60	0
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	0	20	80	0
Being mugged or robbed	0	30	50	20
Theft of personal belongings	0	20	60	20
Sexual assault	0	0	50	50
Sunderland	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Car theft	12	0	76	12
House breaking	6	18	71	6
Physical assault because of colour/religion	29	12	47	12
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	24	12	59	6
Being mugged or robbed	6	12	76	6
Theft of personal belongings	0	12	71	18
Sexual assault	6	0	41	53
Teesside	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Car theft	0	0	100	0
House breaking	0	0	100	0
Physical assault because of colour/religion	0	0	100	0
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	0	0	100	0
Being mugged or robbed	0	33	67	0
Theft of personal belongings	0	33	67	0
Sexual assault	0	0	67	33
Northeast	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Car theft	34	0	57	9
House breaking	17	19	55	9
Physical assault because of colour/religion	21	19	51	9
Mental assault/cultural superstitions	15	13	66	6
Being mugged or robbed	13	15	55	17
Theft of personal belongings	9	13	57	21
Sexual assault	15	0	40	45

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

21 per cent of respondents reported that physical assault because of colour/religion has increased but 19 per cent found a decrease and 51 per cent no change (Table 5.5). The highest percentage perceiving a worsening (50 per cent) was from Darlington, whereas 40 per cent in Newcastle felt the opposite and 60 per cent no change.

House breaking has increased in North East England according to 17 per cent of the women, 19 per cent reported a decrease and 55 per cent no change (Table 5.5). The trend was negative (75 per cent) in Darlington, better (40 per cent) in Newcastle, and unchanged (100 per cent) in Teesside. Other FA&W like mental assault/cultural superstitions (15 per cent), and crimes such as sexual assault (15 per cent), being mugged or robbed (13 per cent) and theft of personal belongings (9 per cent) are of lesser significance and are judged to have changed little over the last five years.

Table 5.6 How common are the following incidents? (per cent).

Darlington	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Rape	0	25	63	13
Domestic violence	25	50	13	13
Child sexual abuse	0	13	50	38
Durham	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Rape	0	0	100	0
Domestic violence	44	33	22	0
Child sexual abuse	0	11	44	44
Newcastle	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Rape	0	40	60	0
Domestic violence	100	0	0	0
Child sexual abuse	0	60	40	0
Sunderland	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Rape	6	24	35	35
Domestic violence	47	53	0	0
Child sexual abuse	12	12	24	53
Teesside	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Rape	0	33	67	0
Domestic violence	67	33	0	0
Child sexual abuse	0	0	33	67
Northeast	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Rape	2	23	60	15
Domestic violence	55	36	6	2
Child sexual abuse	4	21	36	38

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Respondents were asked how common are incidents in their areas such as rape, domestic violence and child sexual abuse. The high percentage of respondents overall (55 per cent) said that domestic violence is very common, 36 per cent fairly common and 6 per cent rare (Table 5.6). Again, there were place-based variations: 100 per cent in Newcastle and 67 per cent in Teesside (67 per cent), followed by Sunderland (47 per cent) and Durham (44 per cent). According to 34 per cent overall, this is a rising trend but 100 per cent on Teesside, 70 per cent in Newcastle and 63 per cent in Darlington said that domestic violence is unchanged over five years (Table 5.7).

Table 5.7 Change in incidents during last five years (per cent).

Darlington	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Rape	0	13	50	38
Domestic violence	25	0	63	13
Child sexual abuse	0	0	38	63
Durham	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Rape	22	0	44	33
Domestic violence	33	11	44	11
Child sexual abuse	22	11	33	33
Newcastle	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Rape	0	20	60	20
Domestic violence	30	0	70	0
Child sexual abuse	0	30	60	10
Sunderland	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Rape	6	6	41	47
Domestic violence	47	0	41	18
Child sexual abuse	0	0	29	71
Teesside	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Rape	0	0	67	33
Domestic violence	0	0	100	0
Child sexual abuse	0	0	0	100
Northeast	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Rape	6	9	49	36
Domestic violence	34	2	55	11
Child sexual abuse	4	9	36	51

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Child sexual abuse (4 per cent) and rape (2 per cent) were not thought to be common in any of the communities and very few thought they were increasing (6 per cent and 4 per cent). Respondents were also asked about the person most likely to commit offence such as rape, domestic violence and child sexual abuse. The majority were concerned about strangers, followed by acquaintances (17 per cent) and relatives (4 per cent). All the respondents from Teesside and significant percentages of respondents from Sunderland (71 per cent), Darlington (63 per cent), Newcastle (60 per cent) and Durham (56 per cent) saw strangers as offering the main threat of rape (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8 Who is most likely to commit each offence? (per cent).

Darlington	Stranger	Acquaintance	Relative	Don't know
Rape	63	13	13	13
Domestic violence	0	38	50	13
Child sexual abuse	0	25	38	38
Durham	Stranger	Acquaintance	Relative	Don't know
Rape	56	11	11	22
Domestic violence	0	33	44	22
Child sexual abuse	0	33	33	33
Newcastle	Stranger	Acquaintance	Relative	Don't know
Rape	60	40	0	0
Domestic violence	0	50	50	0
Child sexual abuse	10	10	30	50
Sunderland	Stranger	Acquaintance	Relative	Don't know
Rape	71	12	0	18
Domestic violence	0	41	47	6
Child sexual abuse	12	6	24	59
Teesside	Stranger	Acquaintance	Relative	Don't know
Rape	100	0	0	0
Domestic violence	0	67	33	0
Child sexual abuse	0	33	33	33
Northeast	Stranger	Acquaintance	Relative	Don't know
Rape	66	17	4	13
Domestic violence	0	43	47	9
Child sexual abuse	6	17	30	47

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

With respect to Bangladeshi women in particular, domestic violence is severely under-reported. Bangladeshi women are more likely to suffer abuse by multiple family members in the home, not just their husbands. I have found that most of the women had faced family abuse not only inflicted by partners or husbands also from friends and relatives. It is important to recognize that some of the most violent behaviour towards women on the part of family members is committed by other women, in particular by mothers-in-law.

Usually domestic violence is committed by relatives (47 per cent) and acquaintances (43 per cent) in the Bengali community. A surprisingly highest percentage of respondents from Teesside (67 per cent) followed by Newcastle (50 per cent) and Sunderland (41 per cent) reported acquaintances to be a threat in terms of domestic violence (Table 5.8). In Darlington (50 per cent) and Newcastle (50 per cent), followed by Sunderland (47 per cent) and Durham (44 per cent), saw relatives also as a risk (Table 5.8).

Most respondents (47 per cent) couldn't comment on child abuse but 30 per cent guessed that relatives would be most likely to commit this type of offence (Table 5.8). One of the respondents expressed her experience:

"One day I have discovered that one of my nieces had been sexually abused by her maternal uncle just after lunch as if he was adoring and loving her and turned to sexually abuse. I became scared and worried about my teenage daughter and always anxious even some one known to us visiting our home for socialising."

Gossip seems to be very common and was a worry for all of the respondents from Newcastle and Teesside, and significant percentages of women from Durham (89 per cent), Darlington (88 per cent) and Sunderland (76 per cent) (Table 5.9). 51 per cent said that it had not changed in last five years but 43 per cent saw an increase (Table 5.10). The vast majority in Darlington (75 per cent) and Sunderland (71 per cent) were in the latter category.

Pre- and post-natal depression is thought to be major problem by 66 per cent of the community and fairly common by 32 per cent (Table 5.9). This was highest (100 per cent) in Newcastle, followed by Darlington (88 per cent), the biggest worries being the delivery of a disabled child and the mental disorder of the new mother. 38 per cent of respondents overall said there had been an increase (Table 5.10) in the last five years. Darlington (75 per cent) and Teesside (67 per cent) residents are feeling this acutely, although, on the positive side, 60 per cent from Newcastle consider it unchanged and 40 per cent think it has decreased. Clearly the context of migration, especially if it is recent and involves a language barrier, is likely to be significant. Migrants from a Bangladeshi rural culture, especially when their usual support network and rituals are unavailable may experience the pre- and post-natal period very differently from in their place of origin. Social workers, doctors, health visitors and surgeries need to cope with the different cultural norms and rituals and try to find out some kind of support to overcome pre- and post-natal difficulties.

Table 5.9 How common are the following in your community? (per cent).

Darlington	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Gossip	88	13	0	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	88	13	0	0
Family humiliation	75	25	0	0
Other Depression	13	38	25	25
Superstition	38	50	13	0
Durham	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Gossip	89	11	0	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	56	44	0	0
Family humiliation	44	56	0	0
Other Depression	22	67	0	11
Superstition	33	67	0	0
Newcastle	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Gossip	100	0	0	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	100	0	0	0
Family humiliation	90	10	0	0
Other Depression	50	50	0	0
Superstition	90	10	0	0
Sunderland	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Gossip	76	24	0	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	47	47	6	0
Family humiliation	47	47	6	0
Other Depression	12	47	12	29
Superstition	35	47	12	6
Teesside	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Gossip	100	0	0	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	33	67	0	0
Family humiliation	67	0	33	0
Other Depression	0	67	0	33
Superstition	100	0	0	0
Northeast	Very	Fairly	Rare	Don't know
Gossip	87	13	0	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	66	32	2	0
Family humiliation	62	34	4	0
Other Depression	21	51	9	19
Superstition	51	40	6	2

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

A significant proportion of women (62 per cent) mentioned 'family humiliation' as very common in their community. This was reported to have ruined lots of women's lives. One told me about a recent incident:

" My husband is suffering a long term illness, shoulder pain due to hard work till late at night as a chef at an Indian restaurant. He cannot work nowadays and I have to look after him as well as the children and other family members here and back home. We've had a lot of economic pressure here and from parents and relatives living in Bangladesh. Everyone here and back home in Bangladesh depends on us and they are waiting for when we will be able to send money to them. Parents and relatives think that we are living in the UK and so must be earning a lot. This makes for arguments and unhappiness among us. Our children are now grown up and also blame us that we have done little so far for all of them but we couldn't make them satisfied. The whole time we are under pressure and full of family humiliation."

The fact that such expectations are causing hurt can be seen in the comment by 40 per cent that they think it has increased recently and 43 per cent say there has not been a decrease (Table 5.10). Basically Bangladeshis living in the northeast have migrated from very rural and poor economic regions. All other dependents of the huge joint family back home help to make a success of migration, with help also from other relatives who have already migrated to England. Once one migrates to northeast England through the chain family migration process, the family members and relatives back home think and expect that soon they will share in a new prosperity in their poor rural lives through remittances. Unfortunately they never think or realize how difficult it is for migrants to get a job and earn on their behalf. Darlington (63 per cent) and Sunderland (59 per cent) are most affected by this issue, but the impact is much less in Newcastle and Teesside.

Table 5.10 How have the following changed over the last five years? (per cent).

Darlington	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Gossip	75	0	25	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	75	0	25	0
Family humiliation	63	13	25	0
Other Depression	25	13	50	13
Superstition	13	25	63	0
Durham	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Gossip	22	33	44	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	33	22	44	0
Family humiliation	44	0	56	0
Other Depression	33	0	67	0
Superstition	11	44	33	11
Newcastle	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Gossip	0	0	100	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	0	40	60	0
Family humiliation	0	30	70	0
Other Depression	30	30	30	10
Superstition	0	40	60	0
Sunderland	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Gossip	71	0	29	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	41	6	41	12
Family humiliation	59	6	35	0
Other Depression	18	12	29	41
Superstition	29	6	59	6
Teesside	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Gossip	0	0	100	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	67	0	33	0
Family humiliation	0	67	0	33
Other Depression	67	33	0	0
Superstition	0	0	100	0
Northeast	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't know
Gossip	43	6	51	0
Pre&postnatal Depression	38	15	43	4
Family humiliation	40	15	43	2
Other Depression	28	15	38	19
Superstition	15	23	57	4

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005.

When asked about trends in the incidents and offences so far discussed, the majority said that most categories are unchanged over the last five years. A significant percentage (43 per cent) of respondents in the whole North East region pointed out that intra-community gossip has increased (Table 5.10). In most cases it is happening because of money or status conflict. Also cultural rituals are involved. They are busy in back biting and making up stories rather than working and developing harmony. The highest percentages were in Darlington (75 per cent) followed by Sunderland (71 per cent). Elsewhere, it was unchanged in Newcastle and Teesside and reduced (according to 33 per cent) in Durham.

Other depressions like unemployment, being tied to stereotypical homemaking, such as cooking, care for children and the elderly, and staying home alone until late at night, are all unchanged over last five years time according to a core of respondents from the North East region (38 per cent). A high percentage of respondents from Teesside (67 per cent) pointed out that other depressions mentioned above have increased over the last five years (Table 5.10). On the other hand, the majority of respondents from Durham (60 per cent), followed by Darlington, found that other depressions are prevailing as usual and are unchanged over last five years time span in their communities.

Superstition is unchanged according to 57 per cent of respondents. This was the response from all of those on Teesside, followed by the majority from Darlington (63 per cent), Newcastle (60 per cent) and Sunderland (59 per cent). Only in Durham (44 per cent) were they found to have eased over last five years.

Table 5.11 How do/would you feel about these offences happening? (per cent).

Darlington	Hate	Dislike	Don't mind	Flattered	No strong view
Flashed at	75	25	0	0	0
Followed	88	13	0	0	0
Touched up	100	0	0	0	0
Leered at	100	0	0	0	0
Whistled at	75	25	0	0	0
Unwanted comments	75	25	0	0	0
Obscene call	75	25	0	0	0
Harassment	88	13	0	0	0
Durham	Hate	Dislike	Don't mind	Flattered	No strong view
Flashed at	100	0	0	0	0
Followed	100	0	0	0	0
Touched up	100	0	0	0	0
Leered at	100	0	0	0	0
Whistled at	100	0	0	0	0
Unwanted comments	89	11	0	0	0
Obscene call	89	11	0	0	0
Harassment	89	11	0	0	0
Newcastle	Hate	Dislike	Don't mind	Flattered	No strong view
Flashed at	100	0	0	0	0
Followed	100	0	0	0	0
Touched up	100	0	0	0	0
Leered at	100	0	0	0	0
Whistled at	100	0	0	0	0
Unwanted comments	100	0	0	0	0
Obscene call	100	0	0	0	0
Harassment	100	0	0	0	0
Sunderland	Hate	Dislike	Don't mind	Flattered	No strong view
Flashed at	88	12	0	0	0
Followed	94	6	0	0	0
Touched up	94	6	0	0	0
Leered at	94	6	0	0	0
Whistled at	71	24	6	0	0
Unwanted comments	88	12	0	0	0
Obscene call	88	6	0	0	6
Harassment	88	12	0	0	0
Teesside	Hate	Dislike	Don't mind	Flattered	No strong view
Flashed at	33	67	0	0	0
Followed	100	0	0	0	0
Touched up	100	0	0	0	0
Leered at	100	0	0	0	0
Whistled at	100	0	0	0	0
Unwanted comments	100	0	0	0	0
Obscene call	100	0	0	0	0
Harassment	100	0	0	0	0
Northeast	Hate	Dislike	Don't mind	Flattered	No strong view
Flashed at	87	13	0	0	0
Followed	96	4	0	0	0
Touched up	98	2	0	0	0
Leered at	98	2	0	0	0
Whistled at	85	13	2	0	0
Unwanted comments	89	11	0	0	0
Obscene call	89	9	0	0	2
Harassment	89	11	0	0	0

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

In order to explore the fear, anxiety and worries of Bangladeshi women in North East region, I asked them to evaluate individual incidents of harassment and the consequences for them. According to Pain (1993), location, space and time have a central role in determining harassment, as well as on women's opportunities for challenging harassment. The debate about what harassment is and how it operates often appears to take place above the level of people's day to day experiences (Pain, 1993). This survey presented a timely opportunity to explore views from the Bangladeshi ethnic minority. Harassment is a common experience for many of the respondents surveyed in the North East region.

Most of the respondents recognise harassing behaviour in their lives, and there is an overridingly negative attitude towards these common encounters. Comparatively young women are the most outspoken and the older ones a little conservative, but both have a strong aversion for such harassment. Even common incidents like leering, whistling and unwanted comments are hated by all the respondents (Table 5.11). These incidents are not necessarily labelled 'sexual harassment' by everyone. However, the reaction about unpleasant or oppressive behaviour demonstrates high levels of awareness of experience of harassment. Being touched up on the bus, in busy public or quieter places, being followed, flashed at, obscene calls and offensive sexual comments in the course of their work are also seen as negative and are hated. None of the respondents feel flattered or expressed that they don't mind these offences happening (Table 5.11).

It has been widely suggested in recent years that minor incidents of harassment, offences and crime have a role in explaining women's fear, anxiety and worries about public and private places in this way, in acting to remind or forewarn women of more serious sexual attack (Crawford, et al. 1990; Gardner 1989; Kinsey and Anderson 1992;

Stanko 1987; Valentine 1992). This research found that sexual harassment has more influence on women's feelings about public and private places than any other factor. The relationship is more significant than that between women's FA&W and childhood warnings or experiences, social factors, economic factors, concern about the built environment or faith in policing and the penal system.

The occurrence of sexual harassment in public space routinely suggests to women that there is danger outside (Painter 1992; Stanko 1987). This is helpful in explaining women's dislike and avoidance of different public and private places and the association of them with an incident provokes FA&W at the time, then the effect on feelings about public and private space may only be short term. But, if a woman looks back on the incident and imagines what it might have turned into, then FA&W will be more pervasive and is likely to affect future movements and behaviour. The context of incidents also has a significant bearing on whether they have a lasting impact or not.

Maintaining a safe distance from others while in public or private places is central to women's feelings of security. Hence being followed, which is experienced as an explicit threat of intrusion into personal space, is particularly menacing. When sexual attacks by strangers do occur, they usually begin with a similar incident and escalate. Therefore the fear created by these minor incidents is justified, and the reaction of most women is to run or to take cover in the nearest busy place.

Table 5.12 Results of fear, anxiety and worry (per cent)

Darlington	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I make sure I don't go out	50	13	25	13
I make sure I don't go out alone	63	13	13	13
I am watchful as I walk	63	25	0	13
I don't answer the door	25	38	25	13
I put off routine calls	25	50	13	13
I avoid certain streets and areas	63	25	0	13
Feel unsafe with strangers	63	25	0	13
Durham	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I make sure I don't go out	33	11	22	33
I make sure I don't go out alone	56	33	11	0
I am watchful as I walk	67	33	0	0
I don't answer the door	22	44	33	0
I put off routine calls	0	56	33	11
I avoid certain streets and areas	78	22	0	0
Feel unsafe with strangers	56	11	11	0
Newcastle	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I make sure I don't go out	70	30	0	0
I make sure I don't go out alone	60	40	0	0
I am watchful as I walk	90	10	0	0
I don't answer the door	30	70	0	0
I put off routine calls	10	30	60	0
I avoid certain streets and areas	100	0	0	0
Feel unsafe with strangers	100	0	0	0
Sunderland	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I make sure I don't go out	6	59	29	6
I make sure I don't go out alone	35	59	6	6
I am watchful as I walk	65	35	0	0
I don't answer the door	12	35	35	18
I put off routine calls	24	6	29	41
I avoid certain streets and areas	65	35	0	0
Feel unsafe with strangers	47	53	0	0
Teesside	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I make sure I don't go out	67	0	33	0
I make sure I don't go out alone	67	33	0	0
I am watchful as I walk	100	0	0	0
I don't answer the door	67	0	33	0
I put off routine calls	0	67	0	33
I avoid certain streets and areas	67	0	33	0
Feel unsafe with strangers	67	33	0	0
Northeast	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I make sure I don't go out	36	32	21	11
I make sure I don't go out alone	51	40	6	4
I am watchful as I walk	72	26	0	2
I don't answer the door	23	43	26	9
I put off routine calls	15	32	32	21
I avoid certain streets and areas	74	21	2	2
Feel unsafe with strangers	64	28	2	2

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

I argue that the groups most affected by FA&W are those who feel at risk from various other forms of discriminatory, systematic violence. The impact or results of FA&W are commonly expressed by the respondents in focus group meetings as well as in interviews. A substantial number (36 per cent) of respondents from the region as a whole pointed out that due to FA&W they always make sure that they don't go out until they are satisfied that they will not be vulnerable. This is especially the case in Newcastle (70 per cent, always), Teesside (67 per cent, always) and Sunderland (59 per cent, sometimes) where FA&W virtually imprison women in their own homes (Table 5.12). 51 per cent in the region don't go out alone (Table 5.12), 94 per cent if we include those who say 'sometimes'. Locally, the figures are shocking at 67 per cent for Teesside, followed by Darlington (63 per cent), Newcastle (60 per cent) and Durham (56 per cent).

Due to FA&W of different crimes, harassment, incidents and offences, a large percentage of Bangladeshi women (70 per cent) are always conscious and watchful while they are walking, especially when they are on their own (Table 5.12). All of the respondents from Teesside followed by vast majority from Newcastle (90 per cent) and Sunderland (65 per cent) are always watchful while they are walking alone. Comparatively speaking, respondents from Durham and Darlington are less self-conscious but the majority are still watchful when walking alone. Due to FA&W, the majority (74 per cent) avoid certain vulnerable streets and areas when walking (Table 5.12). A significant proportion (64 per cent) feel unsafe with strangers.

According to Pain (1993), it is not only women who are at risk from systematic violence and harassment and their effects; other forms of discriminatory abuse exist which can have severe consequences for the social and spatial activities, well-being and opportunities for equality for those who are or who feel themselves to be at risk. In my survey I have tried to understand what are the further effects of FA&W.

Table 5.13 Does the fear and anxiety affect any of the following (per cent)

Does the FA&W affect any of the following (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Travel to and from place of work/outside	63	78	80	88	100	81
Feel nervous in some situation at work/outside	63	67	80	76	100	74
The way that I dress at work/outside	75	78	90	71	100	79
How I behave towards men at work/outside	88	78	90	65	100	79
My choice of work/going to places	88	78	90	76	100	83
I have given up job/going to places	38	33	20	24	0	26
No effect on my working/external life	25	11	10	12	0	13

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

83 per cent say that FA&W affects their choice of work place or places to visit. All the respondents from Teesside, followed by the vast majority from Newcastle (90 per cent) and Darlington (88 per cent) think this (Table 5.13). From the participatory focus group meeting it was clear that this plays a vital role in taking decisions about whether to travel and where, especially after the London bombings and attempted bombings of 7th and 21st July, 2005, which made many muslims living in Britain feel insecure.

How Bangladeshi women dress at work or while they are outside is affected. Many reported unwanted comments about traditional attire and the vast majority (Teesside 100 per cent, Newcastle 90 per cent) feel constrained by this (Table 5.13). Behaviour towards men is a major issue (Table 5.13). From the focus group meetings it is clear that women feel the need to be extra careful while they are outside either with strangers or acquaintances. Elderly people and mothers in the community give a lot of warnings and advice to their young on this subject.

Feeling nervous in some situations while at work or outside is also affected by existing FA&W. The vast majority respondents from the region as a whole (74 per cent) said this (Table 5.13). From interviews I have discovered that women who are nervous in different spaces are directly influenced by the FA&W even in the places where there is no risk. Some of the women in focus group meetings said that prevailing FA&W decrease their level of confidence at work or outside and result in nervous breakdowns. Only 13 per cent said that FA&W have no effect on their working or external life (Table 5.13).

So far I have discussed different FA&W, their causes and effects on the Bangladeshi women living at North East England. I also asked them how they could overcome those FA&W or how existing or prevailed FA&W can be resolved. They claimed in the focus group meetings that a long-term plan for mitigation is needed but could not clear up the problems totally. Some interesting ideas were broached.

Table 5.14 How do you see these being resolved? (per cent)

How do you see these as being resolved (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Be strong women	50	0	0	0	0	9
Changes of mentality	25	0	30	6	0	13
Self confidence	13	11	30	0	33	13
Security change/coping diversity	38	11	20	12	0	17
More community vigilance/warden	75	56	60	59	67	62
Street light/Security light	50	33	70	35	67	47
CCTV/Security Camera	50	22	80	35	67	47
Cultural development at Educational Institute	38	22	50	41	33	38
Strong and robust law against anti-social behaviour	50	33	60	35	33	43
More motivation, campaign against violence	75	33	20	41	33	40
No idea/Don't know	13	33	20	24	67	26

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

The majority (62 per cent) suggested that different incidents of harassment and offences can be minimized through more community vigilance and by increasing the number of community wardens (Table 5.14). This idea is especially rooted in Darlington (75 per cent) and Teesside (67 per cent). Participatory focus group meetings and interviews also threw up ideas on stronger law enforcement, community awareness campaigns, and increased use of street lights/security lights and CCTV/security cameras.

68 per cent of Bangladeshi women in the region feel extremely unsafe in their neighbourhood after dark. This figure rose to 100 per cent Teesside, followed by Newcastle (90 per cent) and Darlington (75 per cent) (Table 5.15). As we have noticed throughout the survey, Durham is relatively speaking the best place for living in terms of FA&W from different incidents and offences. Even so, significant percentages of respondents from Durham (33 per cent) mentioned that they would feel safe in their neighbourhood after dark while 44 per cent think that they would feel extremely unsafe and a few feel moderately unsafe (Table 5.15).

Table 5.15 How safe would you feel in this neighbourhood after dark (per cent)

Safety Scale	Darlington	Durham	Newcastle	Sunderland	Teesside	North-east
Extremely Unsafe	75	44	90	59	100	68
Moderately Unsafe	25	22	10	41	0	26
Safe	0	33	0	0	0	6

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

During participatory observation and focus group meetings a vital issue that came out is depression. Respondents from North East England think that they are depressed due constant FA&W. I therefore included some questions in my participatory questionnaire survey regarding depression. The results show that Bangladeshi women who took part in this survey are moderately depressed due to different prevailing FA&W. From Table 5.16 it is clear that many sometimes feel unhappy and depressed, or feel constantly under strain. Many (34 per cent) also feel that they cannot overcome their difficulties. Despite all of this, the generally cheerful Bengali character comes through and most claim to be 'reasonably happy'.

Table 5.16 Depression Situation in North East

Depression Situation in Northeast(Per cent)	Yes	Some times	No
Capable of making decisions about things	83	15	2
Feel constantly under strain	34	36	30
Feel that couldn't overcome difficulties	34	32	36
Able to face up problems	64	30	6
Feeling unhappy and depressed	23	43	34
Enjoy normal day to day activities	72	21	4
losing confidence in oneself	9	15	77
Think of yourself as a worthless person	2	4	87
Feeling reasonably happy considering all things	79	13	2

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

5.20 Housing

Gavron (1997) and Pollen (2002) discussed the housing situation and other problems faced by Bangladeshis in the borough of Tower Hamlets in London in 1970s and early 1980s (Gavron 1997). In my research I have also tried to understand about the housing situation of Bangladeshi women living in the North East of England. Housing is a major issue here, especially finding a suitable property. The majority of the respondents (49 per cent) in the region live in a terraced house followed by a semi-detached house (21 per cent) and a converted flat (19 per cent).

Table 5.17 Types of Accommodation

Type of accommodation (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Detached whole house/bungalow	0	33	0	12	0	11
Semi-detached whole house/bungalow	0	44	0	18	100	21
Terraced/end of terraced whole house/bungalow	88	22	20	71	0	49
Purpose-built flat or maisonette in block with lift	0	0	0	0	0	0
Purpose-built flat or maisonette in block without lift	0	0	0	0	0	0
Converted flat or maisonette	13	0	80	0	0	19
Dwelling with business premises	0	0	0	0	0	0

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

The highest percentage of women living in terraced property is from Darlington (88 per cent) followed by Sunderland (71 per cent). All of the respondents from Teesside are living in semi-detached houses (Table 5.17) and the majority (44 per cent) from Durham. None of the respondents from Darlington and Newcastle are living in detached houses. The highest percentages (80 per cent) of women from Newcastle are living in the converted flats (Appendix-2A). A few respondents from Darlington (13 per cent) are also in converted flats (Table 5.17) but none from Durham, Sunderland or Teesside. Figure 5.34 gives an overview of different houses at different part of northeast region where Sylheti Bangladeshi women are living.

In order to understand the occupancy period among the Bangladeshi community, I asked how long they have been living in their accommodation. A substantial number (45 per cent) have been more than three years in their present residence (Table 5.18). The highest percentages are from Durham (67 per cent), followed by Sunderland (53 per cent). On the other hand none of the respondents had been in their present house for less then six months. This is a good indication of a sample that is representative of the study context of housing issues.

Table 5.18 Period of Occupancy in the Present Accommodation

Duration of living in this accommodation (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Less then six months	0	0	0	0	0	0
six-12 months	0	11	30	12	33	15
1.5 - 2 years	38	11	10	18	33	19
2.5 - 3 years	25	11	40	18	0	21
More then 3 years	38	67	20	53	33	45

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

The majority of respondents from Newcastle have been living in their present accommodation for 2½-3 years (Table 5.18). A significant percentage of women (38 per cent) from Darlington have been living for 1½-2 years in their present accommodation.

The majority of respondents (60 per cent) from North East England are occupying their present accommodation through purchase with a mortgage or loan (Table 5.19). The proportion is highest among women from Durham (78 per cent), Teesside (67 per cent) and Darlington (63 per cent).

Table 5.19 Types of Occupancy

Types of occupancy (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Own outright	0	0	10	12	33	9
Buying with mortgage/loan	63	78	40	59	67	60
Pay part rent and part mortgage	13	0	50	29	0	23
Rent free	13	22	0	0	0	6
Rented Friends/Parents property	13	0	0	0	0	2

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

A significant number of women and their families (23 per cent) are occupying their present accommodation by paying part rent and part mortgage. These types of arrangements are mainly with the council or a housing society. The highest percentage is from Newcastle (50 per cent) followed by Sunderland (29 per cent) and Darlington (13 per cent). None of the respondents from Durham and Teesside are in this category (Table 5.19).

Only a few (9 per cent) are outright owners of their house or flat, although the proportion is higher on Teesside (33 per cent), followed by Sunderland (12 per cent) and Newcastle (10 per cent). The figure is zero in Darlington and Durham (Table 5.19). An insignificant number of women from Darlington rent properties from friends or relatives but this is not practised elsewhere.

Many of the respondents have their house in their own name in the North East region, for instance 50 per cent in Darlington, 40 per cent in Newcastle and 38 per cent on Teesside (38 per cent). This is less true of Durham (11 per cent) (Table 5.20). It is also common (regional average 28 per cent) for the spouse to be listed as the owner or tenant, especially in the Newcastle area (50 per cent), followed by Sunderland (35 per cent). None of respondents from Darlington and Teesside had their houses on their spouse's name (Table 5.20). 21 per cent of respondents' houses are jointly owned or rented in the name of husband and wife, especially in Darlington (50 per cent) and Teesside (33 per cent).

Table 5.20 Name of owner or renter of accommodation

Accommodation owned/rented name (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Respondent only	50	11	40	24	33	30
Spouse only	0	22	50	35	0	28
Family member only	0	33	10	24	33	19
Jointly (Respondent and Spouse)	50	22	0	18	33	21
Jointly (Respondent and Family member)	0	11	0	0	0	2
Jointly (other combination)	0	0	0	0	0	0

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Those in rented properties tend to rent from an individual landlord (46 per cent), or the local authority or council (Table 5.21). All of the respondents from Darlington living in the rented premises deal with individual landlords. In Newcastle (40 per cent) and Sunderland (40 per cent) the local authority is the principal landlord, but none of the respondents from Darlington, Durham or Teesside.

Table 5.21 Accommodation rented from

Whom do you rented (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Local authority or council	0	0	40	40	0	31
Housing association/co-operative/charitable trust	0	0	20	40	0	23
Property Company	0	0	0	0	0	0
Individual Landlord	100	0	40	20	0	46

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

40 per cent from Sunderland and 20 per cent from Newcastle rented their property from housing associations, cooperatives or charitable trusts. None rent from private property companies (Table 5.21).

The highest percentage of respondents have five rooms, excluding toilet, kitchen and bathroom (Table 5.22). This includes 100 per cent from Teesside, and 67 per cent from Durham (Table 5.22). An average of 19 per cent have three rooms, especially in Newcastle (50 per cent) and Darlington (25 per cent).

Table 5.22 Rooms excluding toilets, kitchen and bathrooms

Rooms excluding toilets, kitchen & bath(per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Two rooms	13	0	10	0	0	4
Three rooms	25	0	50	12	0	19
Four Rooms	0	0	20	0	0	4
Five Rooms	13	67	10	59	100	45
Six Rooms	13	11	0	18	0	11
Seven Rooms	38	22	10	12	0	17

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

30 per cent of properties have three bedrooms and 30 per cent four bedrooms (Table 5.23). All the houses on Teesside have three bedrooms and 67 per cent in Durham. The highest proportion (59 per cent) of four bed roomed houses was found in Sunderland, followed by 38 per cent in Durham. There were no four, five and six bed room residences in Newcastle and Teesside (Table 5.23).

Table 5.23 Number of rooms used as bedrooms

Numbers of rooms used as bedroom (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
One bedroom	0	0	10	0	0	2
Two bedrooms	13	0	60	12	0	19
Three bedrooms	25	67	20	29	100	38
Four bedrooms	13	33	0	59	0	30
Five bedrooms	25	0	0	0	0	4
Six bedrooms	25	0	10	0	0	6

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

The majority of women (53 per cent) are fairly satisfied with their property and housing situation, and 30 per cent very satisfied (Table 5.24). A few (13 per cent) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Only a tiny percentage (4 per cent) are dissatisfied (Table 5.24). Pictures in appendix-2B show conditions of different rooms in a typical Sylheti occupier.

Table 5.24 How satisfied with the accommodation

How satisfied with the accommodation (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Very satisfied	75	44	10	18	0	30
Fairly Satisfied	25	44	80	53	67	53
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0	0	0	29	33	13
Slightly dissatisfied	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	11	10	0	0	4

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

In this research I have also tried to identify different problems related to accommodation. The highest percentage of respondents (32 per cent) mentioned the need to sit out of sight and that there is a shortage of terraces, patios and front or rear gardens/yards and children's play areas. This was especially an issue in Newcastle (70 per cent) and Sunderland (59 per cent).

Table 5.25 Problems with accommodation

Problems with your accommodation (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Shortage of space	25	56	20	24	67	32
Too dark, not enough light	0	22	30	12	67	19
Lack of adequate heating facilities	0	11	10	12	33	11
Leaky roof	13	0	0	6	33	6
Damp walls, floors, foundations, etc	0	11	50	24	67	26
Rot in window frames or floors	13	0	0	12	33	9
Mould	0	0	20	6	33	9
No place to sit out sight, e.g. Terrace, patio, ground	13	0	70	59	33	40

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

A number of respondents (32 per cent) also pointed to the shortage of space. Respondents from Teesside (67 per cent) and (56 per cent) were short of space for individual bed rooms and study, especially those with growing families.

In my study I have also incorporated different issues concerning the neighbourhood of each respondent. 43 per cent of the women in the region as a whole saw their neighbourhood as "Not Bad". This response varied from 67 per cent and Teesside, to 56 per cent in Durham and 50 per cent in Darlington. There may be some small ups and downs but on the whole they are content.

Table 5.26 What do you feel about your neighbourhood?

What you feel about your neighbourhood (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Friendly and cooperative	25	33	0	6	0	13
Not bad	50	56	20	41	67	43
Unfriendly/not welcoming	25	11	60	29	0	30
Unsafe	0	0	20	24	33	15

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

A larger number (60 per cent) think of the neighbourhood where they live as unfriendly and not welcoming. This was true especially of those in Newcastle. One reason given is that their area was initially occupied by the white British and it is now slowly being taken over by the Asian ethnic minority and there is big cultural gap between these groups. The different job orientation, movement and lifestyle exacerbates this gap.

A few respondents also mentioned that their neighbourhood is totally unsafe and that they are scared to live there but cannot find affordable accommodation elsewhere. Most from Teesside, Sunderland and Newcastle feel like this and they mentioned disturbances such as stoning, broken windows, fierce dogs and racial attacks. There is also pressure from neighbours shouting at them to leave.

Despite these problems, the majority of respondents (51 per cent) have lived in the same neighbourhood for more than five years. The highest percentages are in Sunderland (71 per cent), followed by Durham (56 per cent). Staying close to the children's school is the main reason given for staying the present neighbourhood. Other reasons includes being close to the Sylheti community, and proximity to a mosque or Halal food store. Being close to the city/town centre was also mentioned, often because the women do not know how to drive and nor are they interested in using public transport. As result they want to visit and to shop mainly on foot and the family needs access to jobs and business.

Table 5.27 How long in this neighbourhood?

Duration of living in this neighborhood (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
six-12 months	0	11	20	0	0	6
1.5 - 2 years	25	11	10	6	33	13
2.5 - 3 years	13	11	20	18	0	15
3.5 - 4 years	0	11	0	6	0	4
4.5 - 5 years	25	0	0	0	33	6
>5 years	38	56	30	71	33	51

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Table 5.28 Reasons for living in present neighbourhood.

Reasons for living this neighbourhood (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Close to school	25	22	60	29	33	34
Close to business/job	38	11	50	0	0	19
Close to Mosque	38	11	60	24	0	30
Close to Halal Food shop	13	0	80	29	0	30
Close to Sylheti/Muslim Community	38	0	30	59	0	34
Close to town centre	13	33	40	35	33	32
Peaceful and safe	13	33	0	6	33	13

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Most of the respondents (80 per cent) are fairly satisfied with the neighbourhood. Among them are respondents from Teesside, Durham and Sunderland. They think that, keeping in mind all of the issues, they are fairly satisfied and that is the reason why they are still living in their present neighbourhood.

Table 5.29 How satisfied with the neighbourhood.

How satisfied with the neighbourhood (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Very satisfied	38	33	10	6	0	17
Fairly Satisfied	38	56	60	65	100	60
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13	0	0	18	0	9
Slightly dissatisfied	13	11	30	12	0	15

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

5.21 Health

Their health situation is one of the vital issues in the research of socio-economic and cultural aspects especially dealing with the fear, anxiety and worries of ethnic minorities. Weston (2003), for instance, examined the provision culturally sensitive services for ethnically specific and generic service providers. He tried to explore public honour and private shame due to HIV and issues affecting health service delivery among ethnic minority. Elam et al. (1999) addressed the role of social, cultural and behavioural practices in explaining ethnic inequalities in health (Elam, et al. 1999).

Another study tried to identify and describe in detail the factors that influence smoking among Bangladeshi and Pakistani men and women of different ages (Bush 2005). Bush (2005) found that smoking in Bangladeshi and Pakistani women is becoming more common, and acceptable as they become more 'Westernised'. Though smoking in Bangladeshi and Pakistani women is traditionally associated with a strong sense of taboo, stigma and non-acceptance. Women have fewer opportunities to smoke due to cultural, religious, practical and economic restriction. In my study none of the women is smoker. Smoking among women tended to be an activity that was hidden from others.

The cultural practice most strongly linked to tradition, culture and family in the Bangladeshi community is chewing *Paan-Supari*, particularly among women. In contrast to smoking, chewing *Paan-Supari* tends to be an accepted practice in women and is associated with sharing, socializing and celebrating. Most of my respondents are habituated in chewing *Paan-Supari. Paan-Supari* is consisting of betel leaf, betel nut, slaked lime and Jarda that is raw tobacco. There appeared to be less awareness of the effect of chewing *Paan-Supari* on health than there was of health risks associated with smoking.

The dominant health risks that associated with chewing *Paan-Supari* tended to be located in the mouth. Teeth and gum problems (including gingivitis) and mouth ulcers are very commonly linked with chewing *Paan-Supari.* It is often linked with mouth cancer if Jarda (raw tobacco) is included in the *Paan Khili* (Betel leaf roll) all the time. Most of the respondent disagreed that chewing *Paan-Supari* is not detrimental to teeth. According to them chewing *Paan-Supari* gives freshening and cleaning the mouth like mouth wash, makes teeth stronger especially due to chewing of hard betel nut, easing toothache and improving sleep, digestion and relaxation. The most unhygienic part I found is spitting saliva of chewing *Paan-Supari* here and there.

Table 5.30 Health problems due to housing accommodation

Health problem due to housing (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Yes	13	0	20	12	33	13
No	88	100	80	88	67	87

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Most of my respondents have good health and sound physiques and they do not display any sort of fear, anxiety and worries regarding health, other than a few comments about unhealthy housing and accommodation (Tables 5.30, 5.31).

Table 5.31 General health condition

General Health Condition (per cent)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Very Good	25	0	20	18	33	17
Good	75	56	80	59	33	64
Neither good nor poor	0	22	0	18	33	13
Poor	0	22	0	6	0	6

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

I tried to explore any FA&W related to long standing illness, disability or infirmity. Most of the respondents (89 per cent) mentioned that they had no such problem (Table 5.32).

Table 5.32 Long standing illness, disability or infirmity.

Long standing illness, disability or infirmity (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Yes	0	22	0	12	33	11
No	100	78	100	88	67	89

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Most of the respondents said that neither illness nor disability limits their activities though they have lots of FA&W regarding different illness which might at some point limit their day to day activities, such as blood pressure, disability caused by giving birth.

Table 5.33 Does illness or disability limit activities?

Does illness or disability limit activities (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Yes	0	11	0	12	33	9
No	100	89	100	88	67	91

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

All the respondents are registered with a GP (Table 5.34). They are satisfied with the NHS except for the long queue for surgery and shortages of Bengali speaking health workers.

Table 5.34 Registered with GP.

Registered with GP (%)	Darlington	Durham	Newcastle	Sunderland	Teesside	North-east
Yes	100	100	100	100	100	100
No	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Table 5.35 Times visited a GP last month.

How many times visited a GP last month (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
One or two times	88	33	80	76	67	70
Three or five times	0	22	10	12	33	13
More then five times	0	0	0	0	0	0
None	13	44	10	12	0	17

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Most visit their GP regularly (Table 5.35). 70 per cent go once or twice a month on average but few are ever visited in their own home by their GP.

Table 5.36 Is your doctor Bengali Speaker.

Is your doctor Bengali Speaker (per cent))	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Yes	0	0	20	0	67	9
No	100	100	80	100	33	91

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

Most (91 per cent) complained that their GP cannot speak Bengali (Table 5.36). This is a vital issue as Bangladeshi ethnic minority women face difficulties in expressing their health situations in English and this can lead to big misunderstandings (Table 5.37). Many feel shy in discussing their private matters with a GP.

Table 5.37 Problem in discussing private matters.

Any problems in discussing private matters (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Yes	63	56	50	65	33	57
No	38	44	30	35	67	38

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

To develop and make the health facilities user-friendly, several comments and suggestions should be taken into account. Most of the respondents' things that it would be comfortable for them to discuss health related matters with female Bengali speaking doctor rather an English speaking male practitioner. Earlier appointments are expected if possible then no waiting list. More surgeries are needed with interpreting services. Training of health care visitors on different aspects of handling ethnic minority women in terms of different traditional and religious beliefs would also help.

Table 5.38 Suggestions for improvement of health conditions.

Suggestions for improvement of health service (%)	DL	DH	NCL	SR	TS	NE
Bengali speaking lady doctor	63	56	80	35	33	53
More Bengali speaking doctor	50	0	0	35	0	21
More doctors	25	22	0	29	0	19
Earlier appointment/less waiting time	63	33	40	24	0	34
Friendly Receptionist at Surgery	25	22	10	29	33	23
More surgery	25	22	30	18	33	23
Women Interpreter	50	11	0	29	0	0

DL: Darlington, DH: Durham, NCL: Newcastle, SR: Sunderland, TS: Teesside, NE: Northeast.
Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

My work has been an integrated analysis of empirical and conceptual issues. I have had advantages of understanding the cultural and social contexts of my subjects and of being well connected in the local communities. In addition, I was fortunate to be Durham City's Bangladeshi women representative on the Durham and Darlington Racial Equality Scheme and member of Bangladeshi Overseas Ladies Organization (BOLO) in the North East, which opened up further circuits of contacts and provided me with easy access to the community when required. My method of enquiry matched these possibilities by using focus groups and intensive interviewing to elicit insights.

I don't intend here to summarize my thesis. Suffice to say, I feel that I have got 'under the skin' of what it is be a Bangladeshi woman in North East England. If I had had more time for fieldwork and development of theoretical issues, as one might for instance in a doctoral thesis, then I would have engaged more with the nature of the migration process, perhaps with a visit to Sylhet to complement the present research, may be working with organizations such as the Bangladesh Women Migrants' Association in Dhaka, but certainly with greater attention to the vast literature on migration, as represented in the case of Sylheti women by the work of social anthropologist Katy Gardner (Gardner 1995, 2002: Gardner & Shukur 1994). This was not possible and my work has therefore unfolded within rather narrow limits. There remains much further research to do. I would, for instance, have liked to develop the conceptual and practical basis of my use of video ethnography. I also wish I had had time to explore the possibilities of the intensive qualitative methods that cultural geographers are now using.

Overall, the thesis has shown that the lives of Bangladeshi women are constrained by many social, cultural and practical difficulties. The intention is not to paint a negative picture but rather to emphasise the structures of these lifeworlds, which to a certain extent share characteristics with those of other immigrant groups, other societies with conservative attitudes to the role of women, and, also, in retrospect, with the lives of women in certain sections of British society in the past. I do not claim that Bangladeshi immigrant women face unique circumstances, simply that they deserve close attention if the complex structures of muslim communities are to be fully understood.

One final issue can perhaps help to make this point about the need to address the concerns of what have been called 'parallel' communities, where difference – 'otherness' - has recently (2005/2006) become a focus of political debate. This is the fact that, in the course of my research, women from the Bangladeshi community revealed that they are hesitant to contact the police over street crime or domestic violence in anticipation of racist attitudes and that they do not see the police as offering a place of safety and peace. Women from communities that have traditionally been discriminated against may be reluctant to talk with the police for fear of reinforcing negative attitudes towards their community. Lack of an English-speaking ability is another difficulty for some women in escaping violent environments. They are unable to read information about services available to them, such as shelters and hotlines. Interpreters are also rarely present at police stations, surgeries and hospitals to assist women in making complaints and receiving help. Furthermore, sometimes a husband or other family member acts as interpreter but, in fact, misrepresents the situation. It is important to ensure that a victim is comfortable telling her story and that the listener has no conflict of interest. The interpreter needs to be a professional, preferably, a woman, and ideally the interpreter should not be a family member.

Bangladeshi women are also potential victims of crimes committed in the name of honour when they act in a way that is inconsistent with cultural norms regarding women's sexuality. Crimes committed in the name of honour are committed when a woman allegedly steps out of her prescribed social role, particularly with regard to her sexuality. The concept of family honour is central among their communities in the United Kingdom and the consequences of this concept can be grave for the women of these communities.

It is difficult for police to act on these cases as this violence is rarely reported. Also, as with forced marriages, there is allegedly some hesitation on the part of the government in addressing this because of their fear of appearing culturally insensitive. It is important to note that the concept of honour is also linked to the high rate of suicide amongst South Asian women in the United Kingdom. In an effort to preserve family honour, some women kill themselves, rather than disgrace the family by leaving a violent marriage.

Although the United Kingdom has much legislation attempting to address both racial discrimination and gender discrimination, these forms of discrimination persist and are particularly manifest when development issues regarding minority women are examined. The policies and action plans of the government are important steps in eliminating discrimination against women and developing and improving their lives. Further research needs to be conducted on the socio-economic and cultural issues important for Bangladeshi women living in England with a view to developing policies that are sensitive to their needs.

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APPENDIX - 1

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Socio-economic and Cultural Context of Bangladeshi Women in North-East England

The aim of the present research is to understand and explore from a geographical point of view the different aspects of the lives of Bangladeshi women living in North-east England. The four-fold objectives for the research are to:

1) Explore and understand fears and anxieties in private and public places.
2) Present involvement in different economic activities.
3) Survey household patterns.
4) Investigate general health situation.

A. PERSONAL

1. Surname: 2. First Name(s):

3. Age: 4. Date of Birth:

5. Educational Qualification: 6. Occupation:

7. Address: 8. Post Code:

9a. Ward: 9b. District: 9c. County:

10. Martial Status: Married: Single: Widowed: Divorced: Separated:

11a. No. of Children: 11b. Boys: 11c. Girls:

12. Family

Members Name	Relation	Age	Sex	Education	Occupation

B. RELIGION AND IDENTITY

1. How would you describe yourself? (You may tick more than one)

Bengali ☐ Muslim ☐ Sylheti ☐ British ☐ Other (Specify) ☐

2. Which of the above you have mentioned (if more than one) is most important to you?

3. What percentage of the time do you speak Bengali (Sylheti)?

0% ☐ 25% ☐ 50% ☐ 75% ☐ 100% ☐

C. MIGRATION HISTORY

1. In which year did you come to live in the UK?

2. How old you were when you finally left Bangladesh?

3. What do you remember of your feelings about leaving Bangladesh?

4. Which part of Bangladesh did you come from?

4a. Village: ☐ 4b. Thana: ☐ 4c. District: ☐

5. Is this the village/thana/District in which you were born?

6. What would you describe the area as: Rural: ☐ Urban: ☐

7. Who brought you to UK?

8. In which Area did you live when you first arrive in UK?

9. Who did you live with?

a) Family (Nuclear) ☐ b) Family (Extended) ☐ c) Lived on own but with children ☐

d) Lived Alone ☐ e) Other (Specify) ☐

10. What is the reason for living in the present area (If it is not the same as living now)?

11. Have you been back to Bangladesh since you arrived in this country? Yes ☐ No ☐

12. If Yes; How often have you visited Bangladesh?

13. Do you go to Bangladesh with your family members? Yes ☐ No ☐

14. What are your main reasons for going to Bangladesh?

15. Which part of Bangladesh do you stay during your visit from this country?

D. MOVEMENT

1. Where do you buy your bulk food from?

2. How often do you shop there?

3. Who accompanies you usually during your shopping trip?

4. Which places do you visit for leisure?

5. How often do you go there?

6. Who accompanies you during these visits?

7. Which are the places you visit for socializing?

8. How often do you go there?

9. Who accompanies you during your social visits?

10. How often do you visit shopping malls?

11. What are the main purposes for going to shopping malls?

12. Who drop and pickup your children to and from their school?

E. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

1. What is your occupation?

2. What sort of work are you doing at present time?

3. Are you doing work of any of following kind?

   a) Looking after the family, home or dependants.
   b) In paid work full time or part-time, including self-employment.
   c) Unemployed/not working.
   d) Wholly retired from paid work.
   e) Unable to work because of long-term disability or health.
   f) In full-time/part time education or training.
   g) Doing something else.

4. If not in paid work last week then have you ever been in paid employment or been self-employed?

   a) Yes
   b) No

5. If not or never in paid work then would you like to have paid work outside the home? (Probe whether would like training and obstacles to paid work)

   a) Yes
   b) No

6. If ever in paid work, then how old were you when you were last in paid work?

7. If ever in paid work, why did you stop working?

8. What skills or qualifications are (were) needed for the job (if appropriate)?

F. FEAR AND ANXIETY

1. What are the common fears, anxiety and worries at Home?

2. What are the common fears, anxiety and worries at Public Places (Parks, Markets, etc.)?

3. Can you mention some superstitions make you worried that prevails in your society?

4. Which crime do you worry about most? (Please number these 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, in the order that they worry you- with 1 as the most worrying, and 5 as the least worrying.)

	1	2	3	4	5
Car Theft					
House Breaking					
Physical assault because of colour/religion					
Theft of personal belongings					
Mental Assault/Cultural Superstitions					
Being mugged or robbed					
Sexual assault (rape, etc.)					

6. Over the last five years, do you think the following have become more common, or less common in the area where you live in the UK?

	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't Know
Car Theft				
House Breaking				
Physical assault because of colour/religion				
Mental Assault/ Cultural Superstitions				
Being mugged or robbed				
Theft of personal belongings				
Sexual assault (rape, etc.)				

7. Please indicate how common you think the following incidents are in your area.

	Very Common	Fairly Common	Rare	Don't Know
Rape				
Domestic Violence				
Child Sexual Abuse				

8. Do you think each incident has changed over the last five years?

	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't Know
Rape				
Domestic Violence				
Child Sexual Abuse				

9. Which person do you think would be most likely to commit each offence?

	Stranger	Friend/Acquaintance	Relative	Don't Know
Rape				
Domestic Violence				
Child Sexual Abuse				

10. Please indicate how common you think the following are in your community?

	Very Common	Fairly Common	Rare	Don't Know
Gossip				
Postnatal depression				
Family humiliation				
Other depression				
Superstition				

11. Do you think above has changed over the last five years?

	More	Less	Unchanged	Don't Know
Gossip				
Postnatal depression				
Family humiliation				
Other depression				
Superstition				

12. How do you feel (or how would you feel) about each of these experiences happening?

	Hate	Dislike	Don't Mind	Flattered	No Strong View
Being flashed at					
Being followed					
Being touched up					
Being leered at					
Being whistled at					
Unwanted comments					
Obscene phone call					
Harassment at work					

13. What happens due to fear and anxiety?

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I make sure I don't go out				
I make sure I don't go out alone				
I'm watchful as I walk				
I don't answer the door				
I put off routine calls				
I avoid certain streets/areas				
Feel unsafe with strangers				

14. Does the fear and anxiety affect any of the following?

a) It affects how I travel to or from work
b) It means I feel nervous in some situations at work
c) It affects the way that I dress at work
d) It affects how I behave towards men at work
e) It could affect my choice of job
f) It has meant I have given up a job
g) It has no effect on my working life

15. How do you see these as being resolved?

16. How safe would you feel if you had to go out alone in this neighborhood after dark?

18. Are you capable of making decisions about things?

19. Do you feel constantly under strain?

20. Do you feel that you could not overcome your difficulties?

21. Are you able to face up to your problems?

22. Do you feeling unhappy and depressed?

23. Do you enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?

24. Have you been losing confidence in yourself?

25. Do you think of yourself as a worthless person?

26. Are you feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?

G. HOUSEHOLD PATTERN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

1. What type of accommodation do you live in?

   a) Whole house/bungalow, detached
   b) Whole house/bungalow, semi-detached
   c) Whole house/bungalow, terraced/end of terrace
   d) Purpose-built flat or maisonette in block with lift
   e) Purpose-built flat or maisonette in block without lift
   f) Converted flat or maisonette
   g) Dwelling with business premises
   h) Houseboat/caravan or mobile home

2. How long have you lived in this house/flat?

3. In which of these ways do you occupy this accommodation?

   a) Own outright.
   b) Buying it with the help of mortgage or loan.
   c) Pay part rent and part mortgage.
   d) Rent Free
   e) Friends Property

4. In whose name is the accommodation owned or rented?

   a) Respondent only.
   b) Spouse only
   c) Family Member only
   d) Jointly (Respondent and Spouse)
   e) Jointly (Respondent and Family Member)
   f) Jointly (Other Combination)

5. If rented only, from whom do you rent this accommodation?

   a) Local authority or council.
   b) Housing association/co-operative/charitable trust
   c) Property company
   d) Individual Landlord.
   e) Employer
   f) Other organization (specify).

6. Excluding toilets, kitchens and bathrooms, how many rooms do you have in your accommodation?

7. How many of these rooms are used as bed rooms including bed-sitting rooms and spare bed rooms?

8. How satisfied are you with this accommodation?

a) Very satisfied
b) Fairly satisfied
c) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
d) Slightly dissatisfied
e) Very dissatisfied

9. Do you have any of the following problems with your accommodation?

a) Shortage of space
b) Too dark, not enough light
c) Lack of adequate heating facilities
d) Leaky roof
e) Damp walls, floors, foundations, etc
f) Rot in window frames or floors
g) Mould
h) No place to sit outside, e.g., a terrace, patio or garden
i) Unsuitable for my physical disability(ies)/my state of health

10. Do you have any other problems with your accommodation?

11. Has your health or the health of anyone in your household been made worse by your housing situation?

a) Yes
b) No.

12. What do you call the neighbourhood you live in?

13. How long have you lived in this neighbourhood?

14. Where did you live immediately before moving to this neighbourhood?

16. Is there anything you particularly like about living here?

17. Is there anything you particularly dislike about living in this neighbourhood?

18. How satisfied are you with this neighbourhood as a place to live?

f) Very satisfied
g) Fairly satisfied
h) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
i) Slightly dissatisfied
j) Very dissatisfied

H. HEALTH CONDITION

1. Would you say that for someone of your age, your own health is generally:

   a) Very good
   b) Good
   c) Neither good nor poor
   d) Poor
   e) Very poor

2. Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? (By long-standing means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time?

3. Does this illness or disability (Do any of these illnesses or disabilities) limit your activities in any way?

   a) Yes b) No.

4. Are you registered with a GP?

   a) Yes b) No.

5. Over the past month, approximately how many times have you talked to, or visited a GP or family doctor about your own health? Please do not include any visits to a hospital, or any visits you made while abroad.

   a) One or two times
   b) Three to five times
   c) Six to ten times
   d) More than ten times
   e) None

6. Is your doctor a Bengali speaker?

   a) Yes b) No.

7. If No, then how do you communicate with him or her? Do you face any problem or shyness in discussing your private problems with him or her?

   a) Yes b) No.

8. Do you have any suggestion regarding health service improvement?

Signature:		Date:		Time:	

APPENDIX – 2A: Examples of Bangladeshi households in northeast England.

Newcastle Fenham

Middlesbrough Southbank

Sunderland Hendon

Darlington Northgate

Newcastle Hattington Street

Sunderland Hendon

Source: Author's fieldwork 2005

APPENDIX - 2B: Examples of different rooms in a Bangladeshi household.

Sitting Room

Sitting Room cum Dining Room

Bedroom

Staircase

Toilet

Kitchen

Author's fieldwork 2005

APPENDIX – 3: Video Compact Disk

1. Focus group Meeting at Darlington in 29 April, 2005.

2. Focus group Meeting at Sunderland in 9 July, 2005.

3. Focus group Meeting at Newcastle in 13 July, 2005.